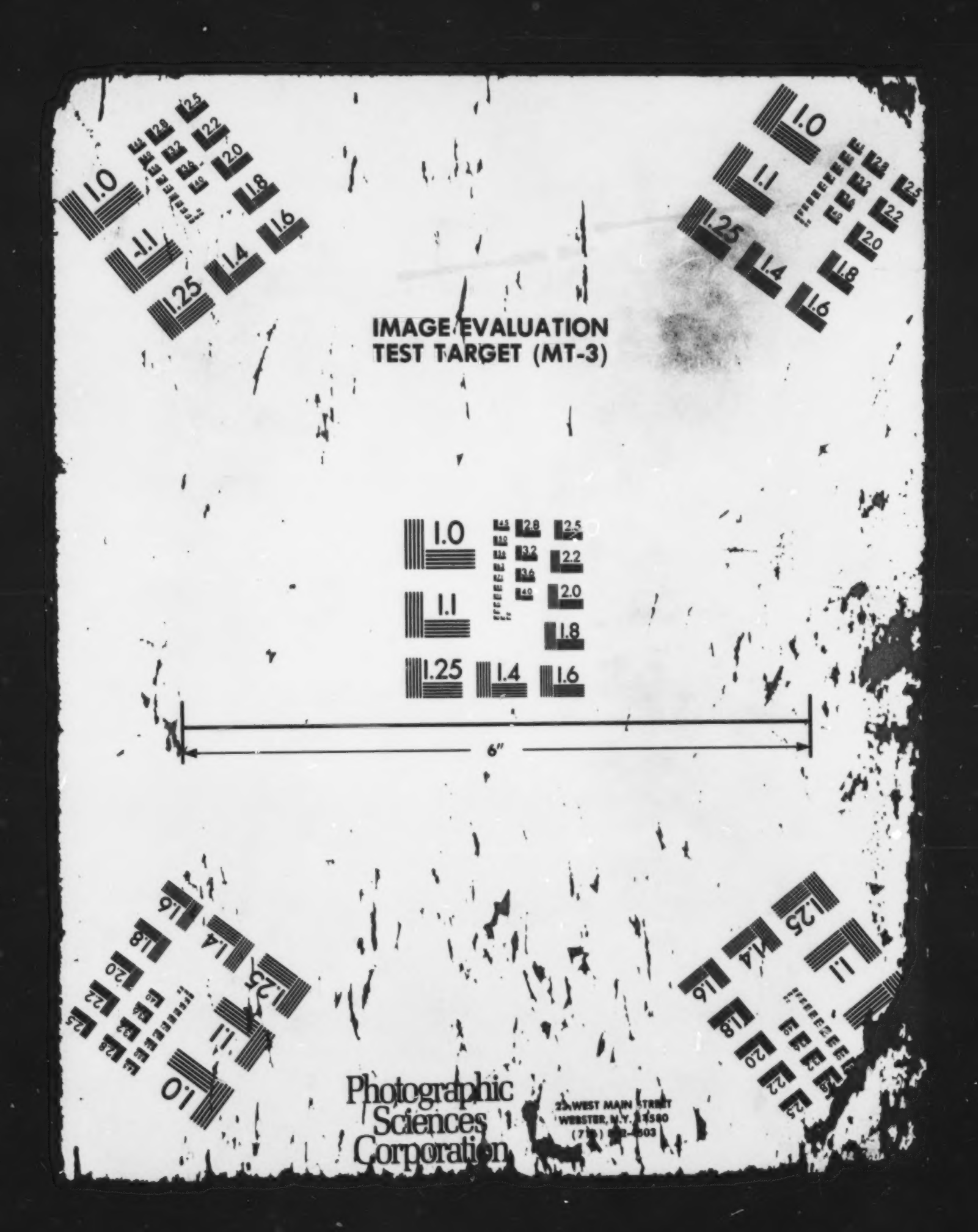
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Daily Report

Near East & South Asia

FBIS-NES-94-236
Thursday
8 December 1994

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Daily Report
Near East & South Asia

FBIS-NES-94-236 *8 December 1994*

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Arab-Israeli Talks

Israeli-Palestinian Negotiations Continue in Cairo

'Urayqat Rules Out 'Major' Progress

JN0712103194 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0600 GMT 7 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Dr. Sa'ib 'Urayqat, head of the Palestinian negotiating delegation, ruled out major progress in the current round of talks with the Israeli side in Cairo on legislative elections and the redeployment of the Israeli Army in the populated cities and villages.

On yesterday's talks with the Israeli side, Dr. Sa'ib 'Urayqat said:

[Begin recording] ['Urayqat] The interim stage is made up of four elements. First, the redeployment of the Israeli troops outside the populated areas and the simultaneous deployment of the Palestinian troops. Second, the revision of the current laws and military orders. Third, the transfer of the rest of powers, given that the Israeli military administration will be dissolved and the Israeli Government will withdraw as soon as the elected Palestinian council takes over. Fourth, electing the legislative council and the direct election of the head of the [Palestinian] Authority.

As you know, as far as the elections' delegation is concerned, this is the seventh round since talks began in Washington in January. On 25 October, we finished our work and, as you know, we submitted a comprehensive paper on the concept and the make-up of the council. We expected and waited for an Israeli reply to the written ideas we proposed. However, it seems that the issues that still need answers are still on the Israeli Government's agenda, which will meet tomorrow. Therefore, we should not expect much from the rounds of talks today or tomorrow. We hope that next week's talks will allow us to get acquainted with the Israeli Government's attitude. We hope that they will come with an authorization to sign an agreement on the concept and the nature of the council's make-up.

In another development, the concept committee started its work today. This committee is concerned with the arrangements of negotiations on the redeployment, the transfer of powers, and the revision of laws. These components are interdependent and are, in the final analysis, linked to the implementation of the provisional agreement.

The issue that we must focus on is that while the redeployment can be carried out without the elections, the elections cannot be carried out without the redeployment. We have heard in the statements of the Israeli Government and many other Israeli officials terms like pre-redeployment, or provisional three-day redeployment, or linking redeployment with security issues or the amendment of the Palestine National Charter. All of these are indications and attempts that are part of the procrastination and obstruction. The Declaration of Principles [DOP] agreement is very clear as regards the first stage of redeployment outside the populated areas and another redeployment to other areas after the elections. We must always remember that the peace process is based on the principle of trading land for peace; that is, the gradual termination of occupation. We believe that the redeployment of the Israeli Army outside our cities, villages, and camps in the first stage is a one-way ticket. The going out and withdrawal of the Israelis would not be reversed. The Israeli side should realize this full well. This is what was stipulated by the DOP. Without the implementation of these provisions of the DOP, I believe that the peace process will be fraught with dangers.

[Unidentified correspondent] Yes, but what is the purpose of the latest Israeli statements which tried to evade the requirements of the Oslo agreement?

['Urayqat] Not only statements. As we have noted, there are Israeli attempts at the international level aimed at linking elections with the Palestine National Charter. There is also talk about a three-day provisional redeployment and, hence, procrastination in conducting elections, which should have been conducted on 13 July [1994]. Israel does not have the right to decide these issues unilaterally; this a process of negotiations between two sides. Therefore, and let us call a spade a spade, the current Israeli attempts fall within the context of issues related to Israeli settlement policy. Right from the beginning, we have told the Israeli side that it is time for the Israel Government to choose between settlements and peace—either settlements or peace. Settlements and peace do not go together and the Israeli Government cannot have both.

[Correspondent] Do you not think, Dr. Sa'ib, that it has become necessary now to embark on the final stage of talks?

['Urayqat] Right from the beginning, even before the peace process was launched in Madrid, we said: Let us enter talks on the basis of Resolutions 242 and 338 and the principle of the inadmissibility of the occupation of others' land by force and the principle of trading land for peace. We have also called for putting all issues on the negotiating table, including Jerusalem, settlements, borders, and refugees. These are the headlines and the issues of the final stage. In accordance with this agenda and terms of reference, we are ready to enter the final status negotiations immediately. But what is worrying is the statements made in Israel on combining the interim and final stages together. These are also tactics to hinder the phased implementation of the agreement. If redeployment outside the populated areas is difficult for Israel, should we expect the issue of removing settlements or the issues of refugees, borders, or Jerusalem to be easy in the talks?

[Correspondent] Dr. Sa'ib, a final question: Can the Palestinian elections be conducted under half Israeli withdrawal or half redeployment in the West Bank?

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['Urayqat] Palestinian elections cannot be held under a provisional redeployment or half withdrawal. As I have said, the terms of reference of redeployment are clearly-defined and redeployment should be made in two stages; a first stage outside the West Bank's populated areas, that is, outside cities, villages, and camps. After electing a council, there will be another redeployment to some specific areas. It will be withdrawal without return because, in the final analysis, the goal of the peace process is the termination of occupation.

[Correspondent] Dr. Sa'ib 'Urayqat, minister of local government, thank you.

['Urayqat] You are welcome. [end recording]

Sha'th: Israelis Have No Mandate

NC0712121794 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1130 GMT 7 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Cairo, 7 Dec (MENA)—The Palestinian-Israeli talks on expanding the self-rule Authority in the West Bank and Gaza resumed this morning under the chairmanship of Dr. Nabil Sha'th, minister of planning and international cooperation in the Palestinian National Authority [PA]; and Yuri Savir, Israeli Foreign Ministry director general.

Speaking before the talks, Dr. Sha'th stated that yesterday's round of talks had focused on the subject of elections and redeployment of the Israeli troops now in villages, cities and populated areas in the West Bank. The talks also touched on the safe corridor and Palestinian prisoners. Sha'th described the talks as fruitful, but added that the Israeli delegation had no mandate to make decisions. He said he hoped that the Israeli Government will give the Israeli negotiating team the authority to make specific decisions regarding the redeployment of the Israeli troops. He called on the Israeli authorities to speed up the transfer of the remaining powers to the PA. He noted that the current round of talks will end today and a new round will begin on Tuesday [13 December] and last for three days. [passage omitted]

Finance, Trade, Tourism Councils To Form

NC0712143694 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1350 GMT 7 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 7 Dec (MENA)—The follow-up committee of the economic development committee stemming from the multilateral talks on peace in the Middle East has decided to form three regional councils for finance, trade, and tourism.

This was stated by sources close to the follow-up committee which met in Cairo the day before yesterday, Monday [5 December], at the level of senior officials. Representatives from Egypt, Jordan, Palestine, Israel, the European Union, Japan, the United States, and France took part in the meetings.

The conferees split into four subcommittees to discuss the issues of infrastructure, tourism, trade, and financing and also to discuss proposed projects for strengthening regional cooperation.

Agreement was reached at the end of the meetings to form three regional councils: a regional bank council, which Egypt proposed be headquartered in Cairo; a regional tourism council; and a trade council. The sources added that Jordan had proposed that the secretariat general of the three councils be headquartered in Amman.

Sha'th on Elections, Troop Redeployment

JN0712181394 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Arabic 1550 GMT 7 Dec 94

[Interview with Dr. Nabil Sha'th, PA official in charge of planning and international cooperation, in Cairo, by Sa'id Mu'addi, in the studio, on 7 December; from the "With the Events" program—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Mu'addi] Dr. Nabil Sha'th: What took place in the brief round of Israeli-Palestinian talks which concluded in Cairo today?

[Sha'th] This round discussed opening the negotiations on the second part or phase of the Palestinian-Israeli talks. This was stipulated in the Declaration of Principles [DOP] signed in Washington on 13 September 1993. The DOP dedicated the first phase to Gaza and Jericho, the second phase to the West Bank—the so-called interim agreement—and the third phase to the final solution.

We are now beginning the real negotiations on the transitional phase which means four things: First, redeploying the Israeli forces—as a first stage—outside the Palestinian cities and villages in the West Bank; second, transferring all powers from the Israeli Civil Administration to the PA; third, holding Palestinian general elections for the Palestinian Council; and fourth, amending the laws and orders.

These four topics are now under discussion. Yesterday and today, we began to discuss issues related to the troop redeployment and the transfer of powers. Discussions on the issue of elections continued in an independent committee as part of the negotiations on elections which lasted six weeks.

[Mu'addi] Naturally, the security dimension following an Israeli Defense Forces' redeployment and withdrawal from the densely-populated areas, was discussed, or was perhaps the prevailing issue in these negotiations.

[Sha'th] Certainly, because we are wholly interested in security in the West Bank and Gaza for all parties whether Palestinians or Israelis. We also discussed in detail how to accomplish the Israeli troop withdrawal

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without creating security problems to both parties. Security is ultimately an important issue for both the Palestinians and Israelis.

[Mu'addi] Dr. Nabil: The [Israeli] cabinet today continued to deliberate this issue. Most ministers asserted that the Government is determined to continue honoring the agreement with the Palestinians. They, however, expressed some fears regarding the security arrangements.

[Sha'th] In fact, I am fully aware of the deliberations in the Israeli cabinet and in the Israeli newspapers. However, I today heard from the head of the Israeli negotiating delegation that this does not at all mean a change in the Israeli Government's commitment to fully implement the DOP, and not to obstruct it.

In studying the troop redeployment, we take into account all the required security measures, which are a substantive part of the negotiations on the interim agreement.

[Mu'addi] Dr. Nabil: Can there be any speculation regarding the dates to begin implementing these articles?

[Sha'th] It is indeed difficult now to set dates, especially since we are six months short of the date agreed in the DOP; namely, nine months after signing the DOP, which was 13 July 1994. Suffice to say that we are extremely interested in speed and, at the same time, utmost care, so we will reach a satisfactory agreement that can be implemented as soon as possible through negotiations.

[Mu'addi] The last question, Dr. Nabil, is: There are contacts to hold a meeting between Yasir 'Arafat and Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres at the Erez checkpoint. What is the aim of this meeting?

[Sha'th] In fact, Foreign Minister Peres telephoned President 'Arafat in Gaza yesterday, and informed him of the results of his efforts at the Socialist International conference in an attempt to secure larger financial aid to the PA and prepare for the coming phase of negotiations, especially since an important meeting will be held in Oslo among President 'Arafat, Prime Minister Rabin, and Foreign Minister Peres. This will be followed by intensive negotiations next week.

These successive meetings are designed to achieve a real breakthrough in the peace process, and at the same time to provide material and financial support for the Palestinian people in the PA [Palestinian Authority] areas.

[Mu'addi] Dr. Nabil Sha'th in Cairo, thank you very much.

[Sha'th] Thank you.

Redeployment Talks To Resume 13 Dec

TA0712185994 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1600 GMT 7 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Talks between Israel and the Palestinians on the next phase of the autonomy are to resume in Cairo next Tuesday [13 December]. This was decided at the end of today's session at which the sides discussed the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] redeployment, but in general terms only.

Uri Savir, director general of the Foreign Ministry, said the redeployment creates security problems for Israel but, he believes, a formula satisfying both sides could be found.

Nabil Sha'th, the Palestinian leader, claimed Israel had turned up with empty hands. He said Israel should have put forward a plan for the army's withdrawal from Arab population centers in the West Bank.

Negotiators View Discussions

NC0712192594 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1700 GMT 7 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 7 Dec (MENA)—Dr. Nabil Sha'th, minister of planning and international cooperation in the Palestinian Authority [PA], stated that the round of Palestinian-Israeli negotiations held in Cairo today dealt with the redeployment of Israeli forces in the West Bank towns and villages, the entry of the Palestinian forces, and the transfer of all authority and prerogatives from the Israeli civilian authority to the PA.

Speaking at the joint news conference he held today with Yuri Savir, the Israeli Foreign Ministry's director general who led the Israeli delegation to the talks, Dr. Sha'th said that discussions began on the issues of holding elections for the Palestinian Council in the West Bank and Gaza and amending the Israeli military orders and laws that have been in force in the West Bank since its occupation in 1967. He added that an agreement was reached on resuming the negotiations in Cairo next Tuesday for three days.

Both Dr. Sha'th and Yuri Savir stressed the commitment of the PA and Israel to implement the Palestinian-Israeli Declaration of Principles and denied that there is any intention to change its clauses. They also stressed their commitment to achieve security for both sides.

Dr. Sha'th declared the Palestinian side's rejection of holding legislative elections without completion of the redeployment of the Israeli forces. He said that the Israeli side stressed during this round of negotiations its commitment to redeploy Israeli forces in the West Bank outside the populated areas and start the legislative elections after the entry of the Palestinian police forces to West Bank towns and villages.

He added that the two sides also reviewed a number of issues related to economic affairs, the release of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli prisons, and the safe corridor between the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. He noted that these issues have been left without a solution since the previous negotiations.

On his part, Yuri Savir declared Israel's intention to implement all the clauses of the second stage of the

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declaration. He said that there is a common understanding to improve the implementation of the agreement in future.

He added that the two sides discussed issues related to the elections and that the talks will be completed during the next round, especially the issue of the redeployment of the Israeli forces in the West Bank and the transfer of civilian authority to the Palestinians. He said that his country's delegation stressed the importance of the security factor for the Israelis and Palestinians and for their economies. He added that this concerns the implementation of the agreement between the two peoples in letter and spirit so that a successful self-rule can be achieved not only in Gaza but in all the West Bank. He said that he expects the Oslo meeting between 'Arafat, Rabin, and Peres to overcome some obstacles.

Savir expressed his belief that the Palestinian and Israeli sides are committed to the implementation of the declaration and of not changing its clauses. He denied that there is any intention to amend the clauses, noting that such an amendment would not be assured. He said that the problems that arise during the negotiations are not being caused by what was written in the declaration but because they arose during these negotiations. He added that some of these problems arose during the implementation of self-rule in the first stage, including unemployment, violence, and other incidents that took place recently, noting that there are enemies of peace and that obstacles are appearing. He stressed that, according to the declaration, the holding of the elections will start simultaneously with the redeployment of the Israeli forces and the transfer of civilian authority to the Palestinians. He reiterated Israel's commitment to this agreement.

Explaining the issue of the redeployment of Israeli forces, Dr. Sha'th said that the first stage is that the Israeli forces be deployed outside the inhabited areas so that the Palestinian police can enter these areas and take over the responsibility of supervising the elections alongside international observers.

'Urayqat on Change in Israeli Stance

NC0712194894 London MBC Television in Arabic 1800 GMT 7 Dec 94

[Interview with Sa'ib 'Urayqat, minister of local government in the Palestinian Authority, by Mu'tazz al-Dimirdash in Cairo on 7 December—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] ['Urayqat] There are some very dangerous indications. There are very dangerous test balloons that we are seeing from the Israeli side, and to a certain extent from the U.S. side. There are new expressions we are hearing for the first time from the Rabin government, expressions such as "temporary redeployment," "prior to redeployment," "refusal to hold elections over issues dealing with changing the Palestinian National Charter," or issues pertaining to security matters.

[Al-Dimirdash] Dr. Sa'ib 'Urayqat, is it possible to accept the principle of holding Palestinian elections if the Israeli forces are not redeployed?

['Urayqat] We firmly believe that elections cannot take place without redeployment. There cannot be a transitional stage without redeployment, without the departure and withdrawal of the Israeli forces. If there is any Israeli hesitation or attempt to change the agreement, then we do not have an agreement. This means the end of the peace process.

Israeli, PA Officials Meet at Erez Checkpoint

PA Asked To Present Seaport Plans

TA0712161594 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1500 GMT 7 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] A meeting between representatives of Israel and the Palestinian Authority [PA], held at the headquarters of the liaison committee at the Erez checkpoint, ended a short while ago.

The representatives discussed the issue of building a seaport in Gaza. The head of the Israeli delegation demanded that in their next meeting, in 10 days, the Palestinians present detailed plans for the construction of the planned seaport.

'Arafat on 'Fruitful' Meeting With Peres

TA0812103094 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1000 GMT 8 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] The meeting between Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres and PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat has ended. Speaking at a joint news conference after the meeting, 'Arafat said that the meeting had been fruitful and both parties had discussed the continued implementation of the Declaration of Principles, elections in the territories, and the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] redeployment.

The PLO chairman added that the Palestinians had to show understanding of Israel's security needs and had taken this into account.

Replying to a question from our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem, 'Arafat said that there was no process of Lebanonization inside the Gaza Strip and that this was an inaccurate portrayal of the situation. 'Arafat also said that he would visit Jordan this month.

Further on 'Arafat, Peres Comments

TA0812115894 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1100 GMT 8 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres and PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat met this morning at the Erez crossing. After the meeting, 'Arafat said he hoped for early elections and emphasized the need for security for the Israelis.

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[Begin 'Arafat recording] We have to understand also, and we are speaking about elections, the necessity of the Israelis for security, and we are putting it in our consideration, and we have to put it in our consideration. No doubt, at the same time we have to coordinate in a way which we can satisfy both of our needs to carry on with the peace process by all our activities and good intentions. We are sure that through these priorities which we are speaking about we will be able to carry on the peace process. [end recording]

For his part, Foreign Minister Peres said his meeting with 'Arafat went well. He was asked about reports that Israel was looking to make changes in the Oslo agreement with the PLO.

[Begin Peres recording] I want to make clear that no modification is possible, but by mutual agreement. If the two partners will agree, okay. I personally believe that within the existing framework we can discover the necessary answers for our problems. I do not see a real need to change the DOP [Declaration of Principles], but if the chairman will come and suggest, then we shall agree, or that we shall come and suggest, and the chairman agrees. By mutual agreement, we can modify, yes, but not unilaterally. This is the spirit of the agreement. [passage omitted including indistinct question by unidentified correspondent; Peres' answer follows]

I do not think so, I do not think so. I think we can work out within the existing framework. We can decide on priorities, we can decide to take this issue first and that issue second, or the other way round, but all this should be done in an air of understanding and mutual agreement. [end recording]

Palestinian Demands Prevent Labor Accord Signing

TA0712193894 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1900 GMT 7 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] In Brussels, the signing of an agreement on cooperation between the Histadrut labor federation and the Palestinian labor unions was prevented because the Palestinians raised political demands before the signing ceremony.

Our correspondent Ya'el Ayalon reports that the Palestinians demanded, among other things, that the Histadrut pledge to support the division of Jerusalem and the establishment of a Palestinians state. Histadrut Chairman Hayim Ramon and Histadrut official Amir Peretz rejected the demands outright. The agreement deals with the money collected from the residents of the territories, joint committees, and protecting social rights.

Inter-Arab Affairs

Iran-Iraq Bilateral Trade Records Marked Growth

MM0512152594 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 5 Dec 94 pp 1, 4

[Report by Walid Abi-Murshid: "Iranian-Iraqi Trade Deals Include Military Spare Parts"]

[FBIS Translated Text] London—A European source has confirmed to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that bilateral trade relations between Iraq and Iran recorded a marked growth in 1994 despite the international embargo imposed on Iraq. The source said that the deals Iran concluded with Iraq this year total $350 million in value.

The source in question adds that Tehran is imposing an official blackout on the volume and method of its trade dealings with Iraq. But trade documents prove that Iranian-Iraqi deals included military spare parts imported mostly via the Czech capital, Prague. And that the costs are to be paid in Iraqi oil exports at a rate not exceeding $5 a barrel.

The European source says that the Czech state is currently playing a high-profile role with regard to dealings with both Iraq and Iran, sometimes acting as a broker.

The source adds that the Czech state, which is seeking to find a market for its military products, is planning an immediate resumption of its trade dealings with Iraq once the international embargo imposed on Iraq is lifted.

The Czech Skoda establishment is in charge of the trade contacts with a number of Iraqi officials, most notably Iraqi President Saddam Husayn's son, 'Udayy, and Husayh Kamil Hasan al-Tikriti, industry minister and chairman of the Military Industrialization Organization.

The European source's information indicates that Skoda, which has been bought by Germany's Siemens company, offered Iraqi officials the option to build nuclear reactors for civilian use with German technology. And for Iranian officials it offered to complete building the Bushehr reactor which Siemens had started work on.

The source's information confirms that a Czech delegation visited Baghdad a few weeks ago. It included officials from an establishment specializing in advanced military technology, a company specializing in manufacturing steel and housings for nuclear reactors and nuclear fuel depots, a company manufacturing optical equipment, and a company specializing in manufacturing chemical weapons.

In its contacts with Iraqi officials Prague is focusing on readying deals in various fields of armament, to be implemented once the international embargo on Iraq is lifted, proceeding from an official expectation that the Security Council will begin gradually to lift the embargo next year.

Palestinian Affairs

Reportage on Reaction to Christopher's Visit

'Abd-al-Rahim on Visit, Cairo Talks

JN0712132094 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0655 GMT 7 Dec 94

[Telephone interview with al-Tayyib 'Abd-al-Rahim, secretary general of the Palestinian Authority, in Gaza,

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by unidentified correspondent; from the phone-in program "Good Morning, Palestine"—live]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Correspondent] Good morning.

['Abd-al-Rahim] I am speaking from Gaza.

[Correspondent] Who is speaking, please?

['Abd-al-Rahim] I am al-Tayyib.

[Correspondent] Welcome to al-Tayyib 'Abd-al-Rahim, secretary general of the National Authority [NA]. Thank you for this call.

['Abd-al-Rahim] Are you in the studio now? Am I on the air?

[Correspondent] Yes, you are on the air on the "Good Morning, Palestine" program.

['Abd-al-Rahim] Mr. Christopher will visit Gaza and meet with the brother President [Yasir 'Arafat] and some National Authority members.

[Correspondent] When will they meet?

['Abd-al-Rahim] Today, at about 1330 [1130 GMT]. The meeting will discuss the obstacles placed by the Israeli side on the Palestinian track, especially as regards the implementation of the interim period which is represented in the redeployment of the Israeli army, elections, the amendment of laws, and the transfer of the rest of powers. This is the second such meeting in Gaza since the advent of the NA. The previous meeting was in Cairo. Circumstances related to the kidnapping of the Israeli soldier caused that meeting to be held in Cairo. I believe that this meeting is significant and that the fact that it will be held in Gaza has some political implications. We welcome the U.S secretary of state. We will talk with him frankly.

[Correspondent] Al-Tayyib 'Abd-al-Rahim, today, talks will be resumed today in Cairo on elections and the deployment of the Israeli army. Thus far, Israeli negotiators are not authorized to make decisions in this regard. Furthermore, there are Israeli statements that seek to avoid the requirements of peace. How do you view these statements in light of this stage in which we are approaching the West Bank?

['Abd-al-Rahim] I would like to say that the Israelis are procrastinating and placing hurdles and obstacles before the implementation of the interim period or the second stage of the Declaration of Principles [DOP] agreement. If some Israeli politicians remain captives to the security mentality customary of some Israeli generals, I think the peace process will not proceed forward. In other words, security is the nightmare of some Israeli generals, who think of nothing but security. This type of thinking will not achieve security for Israel. Pushing the peace process forward will provide security. Braking, delaying, or obstructing all steps toward the implementation of the second stage of the DOP on the pretext of security will cause adverse consequences. There might be a meeting soon between the brother president and Mr. Shim'on Peres, before the president's departure for Oslo to receive the Nobel prize. Some groundless Israeli statements were made by the chief of the military intelligence and other generals on Lebanonization. We would not say anything in this regard and would only quote Peres' reply that there are no bases for Lebanonization in the Gaza Strip or among the Palestinian people. We are not a sectarian people; we have lived together throughout many generations. We believe in national unity and democracy. Yesterday, members of the NA, the PLO, and brothers in Hamas [the Islamic Resistance Movement] joined hands in removing the graffiti from Gaza walls. This is a proof of national unity. Some incidents take place and we draw lessons from them to enrich our experience. Statements by some Israeli leaders or generals that there is Lebanonization are intended to prevent us from moving on to the West Bank and from assuming power there. They use all pretexts. They are not ready, but we are ready. They always charge that Palestinians are not ready. We are ready, despite our simple capabilities, which you know quite well, to assume everything in the West Bank.

[Correspondent] 'Al-Tayyib 'Abd-al-Rahim, now that you are in the homeland among your people, how do you see the homeland under the NA?

['Abd-al-Rahim] The homeland we want requires us to pool all our efforts. We must devote every minute of our time for the homeland of which we have dreamed and which we want for our children. Our performance should also be good and there should be zeal and warmth in work as was the case during the revolution. The homeland we want is that which we have always dreamed of as the most beautiful homeland.

[Correspondent] Tomorrow is the intifadah anniversary. What do you say to the injured and the prisoners?

['Abd-al-Rahim] The intifadah is the last turning point in the course of the Palestinian struggle, which led us to the homeland. The intifadah, with its glorious and bitter years and the suffering of our people, including students, workers, teachers, lawyers, and on all levels and sectors, was one of the landmarks of not only the national struggle but also the world struggle in which the stone proved its efficiency. A central ceremony will be held here in Jabalyah and you know that Jabalyah camp was the birthplace of the intifadah and its main base. A central ceremony will be held here in Jabalyah in the attendance of the brother president and all key figures. There will also be rallies and festivities in many Palestinian cities, villages, and camps. This is an evidence of the faithfulness of our people to their martyrs, detainees, injured, and maimed, to the hundreds of martyrs, and thousands of injured and prisoners who are still in the Israeli prisons. We are always doing our best to secure their release from prison so that they can enjoy freedom, along with us.

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[Correspondent] Al-Tayyib 'Abd-al-Rahim, we are glad for your call, which is a good initiative by al-Tayyib 'Abd-al-Rahim, the secretary general of the presidency. Thanks for calling.

['Abd-al-Rahim] I called just to say good morning. I did not know that I would be on the air.

[Correspondent] Have a nice day and good morning to his excellency the president, all the NA members, and our people.

'Arafat Adviser Comments on Visit

JN0712192294 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1728 GMT 7 Dec 94

[Interview with Nabil Abu-Rudaynah, PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat's adviser and official spokesman, by correspondent Salah Salamah, on 7 December; place not given—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Salamah] President Yasir 'Arafat received U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher in Gaza today. Can you tell us what were the most prominent points that the Palestinian side raised at this meeting?

[Abu-Rudaynah] President Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat] began the meeting by stressing the importance of holding the elections as soon as possible in accordance with the agreement that was signed in Oslo and Cairo. The discussion then dealt with the results of the donor countries Brussels meetings. Secretary Christopher stressed the importance of the U.S. role which supports these efforts and how the U.S. delegation played an effective role in Brussels to render the conference a success. The discussion also dealt with issues of mutual interest to the Palestinian and U.S. sides and the issue of Israel's delaying the implementation of the peace agreements. The United States voiced understanding of the Palestinian viewpoint on the issue of the elections and the donor countries' assistance which is long overdue.

[Salamah] Did you submit specific requests to the U.S. Administration for expediting the implementation of the agreements signed with Israel?

[Abu-Rudaynah] Yes. President Abu-'Ammar called on the United States, as one of the cosponsors of the peace conference, to carry out its role and help expedite the implementation of the agreements that were signed in Washington, Oslo, and Cairo. Generally speaking, the Palestinian side insists on holding the elections as soon as possible in implementation of the agreements. The United States and the world at large consider this request as being a fair request.

[Salamah] Mr. Nabil Ab-Rudaynah, President Yasir 'Arafat will meet with Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres at Erez checkpoint tomorrow, and will meet with Israeli Prime minister Yitzhaq Rabin in Oslo at the end of this week on the occasion of receiving the Nobel peace prize. In your opinion, can these meetings result in a definitive agreement on extending the self-rule areas and holding the elections?

[Abu-Rudaynah] President Abu-'Ammar and Foreign Minister Peres will meet tomorrow at the request of the Israeli foreign minister. As you know, President Abu-'ammar will attend the Nobel prize ceremony in Oslo. Rabin and Peres will also be there. It is certain that meetings will be held on the sidelines of this ceremony.

[Salamah] President 'Arafat has mentioned that the talks with Secretary Christopher have also dealt with Israel's security needs, and the U.S. secretary, in his turn, said that the Palestinian leader has emphasized to him he is aware of his responsibilities in combating terrorism and violence. Do we do understand from this that the U.S. Administration has asked you, once again, to confront the forces that are hostile to Israel in the Palestinian territories and the factions which oppose the Oslo agreement?

[Abu-Rudaynah] What actually took place during the official talks is that the Palestinian side raised the issue of the implementation of the agreements and holding elections. The U.S. side put forth the issue of Israel's security. President Abu- 'Ammar's reply was that Palestinian security is also important and that both Palestinian and Israeli security should be taken into consideration. No one asked us to carry out any role toward any party. All that has taken place is that President Abu-'Ammar said that there is only one Palestinian Authority by whose laws all should abide, and we were not asked, and we cannot accept that we have any other role than that of exercising our sovereignty on our land.

[Salamah] Has Secretary Christopher briefed you on the results of his talks in Damascus and Tel Aviv, and has he told you that some progress might have been achieved on the Syrian-Israeli track?

[Abu-Rudaynah] Actually, there were two meetings. President Abu-'Ammar and Secretary Christopher held a closed meeting which lasted 30 minutes. It could be that he spoke there about such issues. At the second meeting which included the two delegations, Secretary Christopher briefed President Abu-'Ammar on his recent talks with the Israeli side only. This took place while discussing the implementation of the peace process and elections.

[Salamah] Do you expect progress on the Syrian-Israeli track in the foreseeable future?

[Abu-Rudaynah] As Palestinians, we continue to monitor the progress achieved on all the Arab tracks. We believe that peace should be comprehensive and just and on all tracks and fronts. We hope this takes place soon.

[Salamah] Brother Abu-Rudaynah, thank you for this interview.

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Radio Reports on Closed Session

JN0712184194 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1730 GMT 7 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] President Yasir 'Arafat, the PLO Executive Committee chairman and head of the Palestinian National Authority [PNA], this afternoon conferred with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher and his delegation at Mr. 'Arafat's office in Gaza City.

President 'Arafat and Mr. Christopher held a closed 25-minute session and were later joined by aides. They considered developments in the Middle East peace process and the progress of Palestinian-Israeli talks. President 'Arafat impressed on Mr. Christopher the importance the PNA attaches to elections as a real commitment of the two sides to a meticulous and full-blown implementation of the peace agreement. They also talked about an early transfer of powers to the PNA in the West Bank and aid from donor nations, against the backdrop of the recent Brussels meeting. For his part, the American secretary stressed his administration's support for the peace process and international technical and financial assistance toward a post-occupation rehabilitation of infrastructure in the areas controlled by the National Authority.

Following the talks, the two held a news conference, in which President 'Arafat welcomed Mr. Christopher in Gaza and thanked President Bill Clinton and the U.S. Administration for their effort on behalf of the peace process. Underlining a determination to stick by the peace process, President 'Arafat said: We still adhere to peace and are fulfilling the peace agreement down to the last detail. The ball is now in Israel's court. Mr. Christopher, for his part, said in reply to a reporter's question he regarded Jerusalem as an occupied city as stated earlier by Bill Clinton and the U.S. Administration. We stand by the peace agreement and it has our unqualified support, added the U.S. secretary. He urged the donor nations to honor their financial commitments to President Yasir 'Arafat to enable him to upgrade and build the infrastructure.

The Palestinian team to the talks included Ahmad Quray', Abu-al-'Ala', minister of economy; Furayh Abu-Middayn, minister of justice; Intisar al-Wazir, minister of social affairs; and Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh, minister of culture and arts and acting information minister; Akram Haniyah, the president's adviser; and al-Tayyib 'Abd-al-Rahim, secretary general of the Presidential Office. Mr. Christopher was joined at the talks by Dennis Ross, overall coordinator of the peace process [at the U.S. State Department] and other aides.

'Arafat Stresses Need for Solution in Middle East

AU0712190094

[FBIS Editorial Report] Vienna NEWS in German on 7 December on pages 44 and 46 carries a 1,000-word "exclusive" interview with Nobel Peace Prize winner PLO leader Yasir 'Arafat, conducted by actor Peter Ustinov in Gaza on behalf of NEWS and the Norwegian television on the occasion of the upcoming official presentation of the Nobel Peace Prize. The interview is entitled "Peace of the Courageous."

Asked about his career as PLO leader, 'Arafat says: "I have been engaged in politics since 1947. I cannot remember how often attempts were made to eliminate me. However, nobody has succeeded in breaking my will." Referring to the upcoming presentation of the Nobel Peace Prize, he points out that he was convinced from the beginning "that it is extremely important to seek a political solution. As early as in 1989, when the International Parliamentary Conference was held in Cairo, I started talking about a democratic state for the first time in which Jews, Christians, and Muslims could live together. It was rejected at the time."

Referring to future developments, 'Arafat emphasizes that "there must be an alternative to war. A new era has started. We must understand that, and we must learn from history. Not through wars but only through peace can we achieve what we want to achieve. This does not only apply to our generation. We must take care of future generations, of our children and their children."

Mentioning other conflicts in the world, 'Arafat states: "I will never forget that talks with the British Government started during my presence in Ireland. I was very happy that this happened during my presence there, and that a solution was achieved." Referring to Bosnia, he stresses: "I also tried to move things in Bosnia by mediating between both sides—unfortunately without success. However, I am ready to continue my mission. I have friends on both sides."

In conclusion, 'Arafat expresses the hope that the peace process will continue. "There is no alternative," he emphasizes.

Favorable Conditions Seen To Replace 'Arafat

NC0812073994 Beirut AL-SHIRA' in Arabic 5 Dec 94 p 6

[From the "News" page]

[FBIS Translated Text] A secret report submitted to the Egyptian Foreign Ministry on conditions in Gaza and Jericho says that 'Arafat banishes democracy in this miniature self-rule region and mistreats the Palestinian opposition, particularly the Islamic.

The report says that conditions are now favorable for bringing in 'Arafat's substitute, PLO Executive Committee member Mahmud 'Abbas (Abu-Mazin), who signed the 13 September agreement between the PLO and the Zionist enemy.

'Abbas is viewed by many as an acceptable figure on the Palestinian, Arab, and regional levels. Washington wants

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a personality who is not hostile to Syria or Jordan to make it easy to pass a settlement under the current delicate situation.

Ghawshah Discusses Unemployment, Elections

NC0812091794 Cairo AL-AKHBAR in Arabic 5 Dec 94 p 2

[Report by Mazin Mahmud al-Shawwa on an "exclusive" statement to AL-AKHBAR by Dr. Samir Ghawshah; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] Palestinian Labor Minister Dr. Samir Ghawshah has stressed that the unemployment problem in the Palestinian territories represents the most dangerous challenge facing the Palestinian Authority. He said the rate of unemployment in the Gaza Strip has risen above 50 percent as a result of the Israeli Government's policy.

Dr. Ghawshah said that the Israeli Government continues to pursue the policy of the iron fist and collective punishment. The closure of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, banning the Palestinian workers from work, banning the transfer of agricultural and industrial products from the Gaza Strip to the West Bank, and prohibiting the export of these products have all triggered negative repercussions in the Palestinian arena in the political, economic, and social areas, the Palestinian official said. Dr. Ghawshah added that the donor states' failure to honor their commitments regarding aid and loans has also helped to aggravate things.

Dr. Ghawshah's remarks came in an exclusive statement to AL-AKHBAR during his current visit to Cairo. Ghawshah said the closure of the West Bank and Gaza Strip has caused grave economic damage. He said that the number of Palestinian workers has declined from 100,000 to under 25,000. This has also helped to make things worse, Dr. Ghawshah said.

Commenting on the Palestinian legislative elections, Dr. Ghawshah said that Rabin's government continues to pursue the policy of procrastination and has failed to implement the provisions of the Declaration of Principles Accord. He maintained that the elections necessitate the withdrawal of the Israeli occupation forces from the Palestinian towns, villages, and camps.

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Algeria

HAMAS Leader Interviewed on Dialogue

MM0712154094 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 3 Dec 94 p4

[Telephone interview with Shaykh Mahfoud Nahna, leader of the Algerian Islamic Society Movement, by 'Abdallah al-Hajj in Jeddah; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] [al-Hajj] How do you evaluate the situation resulting from the national dialogue?

[Nahna] Algeria is living through a real tragedy which will lead to a still worse tragic situation should options not agreed upon by the Algerian politicians be adopted. Perhaps the best way to save Algeria from the evil of collapse lies in adherence to comprehensive and profound dialogue, because it is the only way that would lead to stability and the restoration of normal life. Despite the roughness and the length of this road, it remains the ideal way to contain the crisis, minimize losses, and shorten the road to relaxation.

Dialogue has been and still is the goal and means of people on the religious, cultural, political, or civilizational levels. This dialogue is still going on, although the hard-line information media have been actively asserting the idea of its cessation and break-up. How can the dialogue stop when the flames of fire are soaring?

[Al-Hajj] Do you think things will get worse? Will orders be issued to the military to assume full responsibility in the country?

[Nahna] The situation is open to numerous possibilities. But the most important and strongest possibility is that the Algerian people will vehemently reject the cessation of dialogue among themselves, the return of one-party rule, the distancing of Islam from the arena of political action, the dwindling of political and information freedoms, foreign interference, and the internationalization of the Algerian crisis. The Algerians also reject the shattering of national unity and the call for the secession of some parts of the homeland from the rest of the motherland in whatever conditions. They persistently demand that the solution of the situation should remain in the hands of the politicians while the army should be responsible for the protection the homeland, its unity, its heritage and its soil, the protection of what is agreed upon, and the safeguarding of the Constitution.

[Al-Hajj] There is a war of statements in Algeria and everybody is attacking everybody. How does your Party envisage the way out of the present crisis? Do you believe that the men in power are ready to listen to what you say?

[Nahna] Statements, declarations, and the adoption of stands compatible with the policy or ideas adopted by parties is something normal in the field of politics. But what is not normal is for these statements to turn into a means of inflaming the people's feelings and pushing them toward destroying their own gains, achievements, constant principles, and the unity of their homeland. It is for this reason that our Movement constantly calls for the abandonment of partisan narcissism and narrow calculations and calls for the offering of all possible concessions by the opposing sides so that harmony would return, ranks would unite, and grudges would disappear and the instruments of destruction would turn into instruments of development and building, through a sense of responsibility before God Almighty and before the peoples. This is a matter which demands a speedy rational move to give the Algerian people another chance to express their views on the men and programs in complete clarity without coercion, deception, falsification, or compulsion and with the safeguarding of human rights and protection from humiliation for any reason.

[Al-Hajj] Do you still support the trend which calls for the continuation of the dialogue between the government and the shaykhs of the [Islamic] Salvation Front [FIS]? Do you believe that there is a current within the FIS which always frustrates the steps of the dialogue?

[Nahna] Undoubtedly, the success of any dialogue depends on the criteria of those who want it and those who differ with them on issues. Controversy in Algeria has led to a grave evil which could be called blind sedition, which has led to assault on the people's lives, property, and honor and exposed the country to collapse.

In view of this, the brothers in the FIS realized its [the dialogue's] importance and thus began to call for it and to lay down the conditions for security which they believe would ensure the solution of the crisis. There have been numerous letters with the aim of finding a solution. Thus the message of Dr. Abbassi Madani expressed a view and a proposal which met with interest from numerous political observers and his proposal was considered a positive milestone which could be developed further through political action aimed at achieving semi-unanimity among the brothers in the FIS. For this reason, dialogue is continuing among the real opposing sides and has been marching forward with steps which could lead to a narrowing of the points of contention, provided that there is no interference from some of the hard-liners with the aim of exaggerating the results of the dialogue or stifling its flame through deliberate intimidation, direct instigation, or rancorous statements, as has happened recently. Some political circles are anxious to marginalize the military establishment, despite the fact that these circles have played a prominent role in weakening the capabilities of the Algerians under the pretext of combating violence at the expense of unity and the normal relationship between the army and the people. These same circles have given Western public opinion the impression that the impending threat was from Islam and its cultural values.

Furthermore, there are hidden forces, considered to belong to the FIS, which have been persisting in

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fomenting confusion to prevent the continuation of serious dialogue. We believe that the rational elements in all places are anxious to see the dialogue succeed and make it the means of civilized people.

Smuggling Reduced Since Border Closure

LD0712220994 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 7 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Seventy-five smuggling operations have been stopped since the closure of our western borders last August. The most recent was the operation intercepted yesterday in Sidi Bel Abbes. In this operation the customs services were able to seize 15 kg of Indian hemp which were hidden in a car of a citizen coming from the southeast and who was heading towards our eastern borders. [passage omitted]

Egypt

Official Denies Crisis Exists With U.S.

NC0612165594 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1620 GMT 6 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Shibin al-Kawm, 6 Dec (MENA)—Dr. Usamah al-Baz, Foreign Ministry first under secretary and director of the President's Office for Political Affairs, has affirmed that Egypt's stands and policies are formed independently, without outside intervention or pressures.

Al-Baz said during the opening of the cultural season at al-Minufiyah University today that there is no crisis between Egypt and the United States and that Egypt's policy is based on not intervening in the policies of other countries. It is trying to guarantee pan-Arab and Egyptian national security.

He affirmed that Egypt is not afraid of dealing with the new situation, in view of its culture and civilization. It does not close the door on economic dealings with the world. He pointed out that economic reality moves along side by side with political developments. He said our relations in the Middle Eastern market should be strong and based on a strong economy.

In his speech, al-Baz addressed general international conditions. He said that currently there are powers in the world, consisting of the United States, Canada, and Mexico on the one hand. And there are other stronger and more capable powers—namely, the European powers plus Japan. The latter are technologically developed. There is also China, which has a civilization steeped in culture.

He pointed out that the Russian power which disintegrated could return to its previous status once again in ten years.

Writer Says U.S. Wants To Marginalize Egypt

NC0712173894 Cairo AL-'ARABI in Arabic 5 Dec p 16

[From the "Days" column by Jalal 'Arif: "A Passing Crisis"]

[FBIS Translated Text] No, gentlemen. This is not a passing crisis in the relations between the United States and Egypt and should not be so.

It is the natural outcome of 20 years of erroneous policies since the time when the faithful president [Anwar al-Sadat] mortgaged Egypt's will and decisionmaking to the Americans in return for false delusions of peace and prosperity, which then shrank to $2 billion in annual aid. And most of that goes into the pockets of the Americans themselves, while what is left goes to the pockets of middlemen and agents. The result after 20 years is that we are up to our ears in debt and being humiliated by the World Bank and the IMF. The delusions of prosperity evaporated into the reality where the number of poor people in Egypt increased by 100 per cent in 10 years (1981-1991) and that the average per capita income dropped for the first time in our history, reaching the level of the poorest countries in the world.

As for the delusions of peace, they are ending in the implementation of the U.S. scenario that literally places the entire region under Washington's hegemony and makes Israel the regional superpower while the Arabs chew on their humiliation and watch their rulers placing themselves, their peoples' resources, and their homelands' fate at the feet of the masters in Tel Aviv.

We said before that the signing of the Oslo Agreement and the Washington Declaration were great catastrophes—pan-Arab ones—because they turned the Palestinians and then the Jordanians into a bridge to cross into the Arab world. We said that they were a Palestinian catastrophe because they squandered all the Palestinian people's rights to their homeland in return for making 'Arafat the mayor of Gaza, giving him the right to issue postage stamps, and entrusting him with providing security and safety for the Jewish settlers. We said that they were a catastrophe for Egypt because they meant the existence of an entity on Egypt's eastern front that includes Jordan, Israel, and a Palestinian protectorate, an entity that Israel will lead to an inevitable clash with Egypt.

Now everybody is aware of the catastrophe. Israel is imposing its own conditions and the United States wants to move on to the decisive phase in its scenario for the region, and this requires the marginalization of Egypt's role as much as possible.

Now, Egypt is not needed to encourage the others to jump on the "U.S.-Israeli" train of capitulation. The issue is resolved and Israel is now complaining about the throngs of Arabs rushing to it, out of their belief in the principle of first come first served, while Egypt no longer knows anything about the agreements being concluded except from the television or from Shim'on Peres.

This role, or any effective Egyptian role in the region, are finished. That is what the United States wants and what the new phase in the scenario prepared for the region dictates.

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Egypt is now required to accept its fate, abandon its Arabism, withdraw into itself, drown in its internal problems, and leave the region for Israel to do with as it wants—swallow Palestine and Jordan first and then move on to Lebanon and Syria; attract the monies of the Gulf; and control the region's markets and fate.

Egypt is required to sit in the spectators' stands and watch the Arab rulers race to Tel Aviv. There is no harm in preparing ourselves to join the United States in hitting Libya or preparing for a war against Sudan.

Egypt is required to sell the public sector very cheaply so that in the end it will fall into the hands of Israeli Zionists or the Jews of the world. Then it must hand over the keys of its economy to the new masters in Tel Aviv and accept the role specified for it in the region's new plan—and what a humiliating role.

During the past few days, I have been following up on reports about Egyptian businessmen's visits to Israel under the leadership of the men of the U.S. lobby in Egypt.

How strange it was to read about Shim'on Peres talking to them about the computer (Israeli, of course) that should be in every Arab home. At the same time, the businessmen were confirming to us that Israel will open the doors that are now closed to Egypt's exports to Europe and the United States. One of them brought us the tidings that Egypt will make shirts, but will let Israel sew the buttons on, iron them, and then export them. Another one said that he was the pioneer of agricultural cooperation with Israel. He told us about a very strange discovery that relies on progressive Israeli technology for making pickles. He said, and I quote here from AFP, that Israel will send the jars and vinegar to Egyptian companies; all the Egyptians have to do is add the pickles.

This is what is required, dear sirs: That Israel, which is fortified with nuclear weapons, should control the region's finances and resources and monopolize the developed electronics industries. As for us, we should make shirts, without buttons I should add, and fill jars with pickles. We should then be left free to teach our children that the Zionists did not kill our mothers in Port Said and our children in Bahr al-Baqar, did not usurp a homeland that used to be called Palestine, and did not desecrate Jerusalem or close off the al-Aqsa Mosque.

This is what is required of us. And if we do not do it, or if we stall in doing so a little bit, the doors of hell will open on us and we will be transformed from peace lovers to warmongers who reject normalization and do not want to take on what they call "The Challenge." We will be instantly transformed from a state that is used as an example of privatization to totalitarianists and isolationists, and from America's greatest allies in the region to a big burden best gotten rid of.

We are then told that this is merely a misunderstanding or passing crisis in relations between the two friendly countries, which we have gone through many times and we have overcome peacefully or with some concessions; on our part, of course. Some sides volunteer to remind us of what is worse, like when former U.S. President Ronald Reagan impudently stood up and accused President Mubarak of lying about the Achille Lauro incident. He then refused to apologize for his rudeness. The insult is then accepted and explained off as a mere misunderstanding.

Now, the situation and circumstances are different. Everyone realizes that we are not going through a passing crisis or misunderstanding. This is the basic contradiction between Egypt's interests and objectives on the one hand and those of America and Israel on the other. This is a contradiction they want to resolve now by transforming Egypt into a state without a role or future to be devoured by corruption and terrorism, both of which are American inventions.

This is not a passing crisis or misunderstanding. It is the bitter harvest of 20 years of wrong policies that have dropped us into the well of dependency and debt. We now have only two choices before us: Either we submit to America without conditions or restrictions, or we review all the policies that have led us to this catastrophe.

Many might say that the time for rectification has gone by and that the United States has won, has judged the situation, and has made its decision. Before us lies only the option of implementation. We can do nothing other than perform the role given to us in the American order for the region, even if this consists of making shirts without buttons and filling pickles inside Israeli jars.

As for us, and all those who know the real Egypt, we realize well that this great homeland was, under the most difficult circumstances, capable of overcoming the crisis and saying no. Thus, it was able to trample on states, policies, and rulers. Egypt is still able to repeat this lesson, even if there are some idiots who have not yet understood it.

Haste in Normalizing Ties With Israel Criticized

NC0812075394 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0610 GMT 8 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 8 Dec (MENA)—The newspaper AL-AKHBAR has stressed that unequivocal agreements must be reached on an Israeli withdrawal from the Golan Heights and the occupied part of Lebanon before we can say that an atmosphere of peace has prevailed in the Middle East. In an editorial today, the paper criticized certain Arab countries' rush toward peace with Israel before acceptable solutions are reached between Israel and Syria and Lebanon. The paper stresses that this rush will harm the various Arab issues and further strengthen Israel's obduracy on withdrawing from the Golan Heights and weaken the Arab League's position.

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AL-AKHBAR says that the countries that rushed to establish ties with Israel would have done better had they proposed the issue to the Arab League for discussion before taking any step that might harm the Arab world's interests. The paper asserts that Israel must realize full well that it will have no opportunity to achieve its goals that can be ensured through peace with the Arabs before showing its good intention about withdrawal from every inch of occupied Arab territory.

Musa Returns From Morocco, European Tour

NC0712064494 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 0500 GMT 7 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa will present a comprehensive report to President Husni Mubarak on the results of his tour, which took him to Morocco, Hungary, and Switzerland.

Speaking upon his return to Cairo from Geneva early this morning, Musa stated that the discussions conducted in Geneva as part of the Islamic Contact Group on Bosnia were very good. He added that a specific program of action was adopted in a bid to halt the war in Bosnia. He stressed that negotiations between the Muslims and Serbs must be conducted on clear bases and must not be capitulationist negotiations.

As part of his tour, Musa attended the meetings of the CSCE held in Hungary. He pointed out that during these meetings there was a discussion on initiating a dialogue for cooperation between the Mediterranean states and the CSCE member states. During his tour the foreign minister visited Morocco, where he handed a message from President Mubarak to Moroccan King Hassan II regarding the topics on the agenda of the forthcoming Islamic summit.

Musa on Egypt's Mideast Role, Regional Issues

MM0712130694 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 6 Dec 94 p 5

[Interview with Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa by Hatim al-Butaywi in Casablanca; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [al-Butaywi] Can Egypt's wish to join the Maghreb Union be considered a search for a new role in North Africa, and, consequently, is it a partial pullout from the [Arab] east?

[Musa] Egypt cannot pullout of the east. That cannot happen under any circumstances. No matter how many there are, Egypt will remain a major player. Because if Egypt ceases to play its role, it would mean the Arab world being jolted, or perhaps defeated, in the face of the numerous approaching currents. So this role is continuing and will continue, regardless of the wish of others. Yes, Egypt's role is continuing—very extensively—because the Arab world's interests cannot be left to any power. The problem now concerns Arab solidarity, the decline of the Arab position, the numerous Arab disputes, and the huge onslaught on the Arab world as an identity and entity which we must safeguard, that is the Arab identity, the Arab entity, and common Arab interests. Because this is what unites all Arabs from the ocean to the Gulf. [passage omitted]

[Al-Butaywi] After your recent meeting in New York with the Sudanese foreign minister, can it be said that you have managed to contain the political crisis between the two countries?

[Musa] We have not contained the crisis yet.

[Al-Butaywi] The Sudanese Government says that it has submitted to you proposals to clear the air and restore relations to their normal status. Have you actually agreed on proposals in this connection?

[Musa] We would like to end the existing problem, because the Egyptian-Sudanese bond is historic and should remain so. We are working to achieve that.

[Al-Butaywi] The Sudanese Government also criticizes you for not visiting Khartoum. Why have you still not visited it?

[Musa] We hope conditions will allow a visit to Sudan soon.

[Al-Butaywi] Do you in Egypt still accuse Sudan of supporting extremists in Egypt?

[Musa] I do not want to repeat the accusations in this interview. [passage omitted]

[Al-Butaywi] There is talk about a Libyan mediation between Egypt and Sudan since the recent meeting between Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi and Dr. Hasan al-Turabi.

[Musa] I continue to say and stress that, despite the crisis and tension it is experiencing, the special relationship between Egypt and Sudan can be remedied in a direct manner. We are not adversaries. We talk with one another. I met in the past with the Sudanese foreign minister and so did other Egyptians. We can solve our problems by ourselves with Sudan. [passage omitted]

[Al-Butaywi] After the extension of the sanctions imposed on Libya and the U.S. and British rejection of the Libyan proposal espoused by the Arab League, namely that the two suspects in the Lockerbie case be tried in The Hague (Netherlands), do you see any other solution to this case, or has the matter reached an impasse?

[Musa] Our position is clear on that issue, and it was published in AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in the past.

[Al-Butaywi] The Jerusalem issue is one of the main issues to be discussed at the Casablanca Islamic summit. It is worth mentioning that King Hassan II of Morocco said that Jerusalem will not be restored to what it used to be before 1967. He also said that it would be a fantasy to

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think about recovering Jerusalem. What is Egypt's view on this issue? Do you share the Moroccan monarch's view?

[Musa] The Jerusalem issue should be negotiated, and no unilateral solution can be imposed on the parties. Jerusalem is negotiable and its final status still has not been determined. And we do not at all accept that the matter be determined now. So we differ radically with the Israeli position over the Jerusalem issue. [passage omitted]

[Al-Butaywi] President Mubarak called recently for Arab reconciliation in the light of Iraq's recognition of the State of Kuwait—which prompts me to ask you whether there are Egyptian-Iraqi contacts in this connection.

[Musa] The recent Iraqi step is a sound and fundamental step. We must take account of the Iraqi people's situation. We cannot accept the tragic situation the Iraqi people are experiencing. We are all Arabs, and in the end the fate of the Iraqi people concerns us.

Thus I believe that the Iraqi step of recognizing Kuwait could be a positive start to develop the entire situation. The matter requires restoring the trust lost as a result of what happened. I hope that this will happen, albeit it requires time.

[Al-Butaywi] So there are no Egyptian-Iraqi contacts?

[Musa] There are no contacts in that connection.

[Al-Butaywi] Following his meeting with President Mubarak last Thursday, Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad announced that Syria prefers to leave the existing situation as it stands rather than respond to Israeli demands. Is there an Egyptian initiative to prevent the peace march on the Syrian track from going back to square one?

[Musa] Our position is to support the Arab position. We all support the Syrian position, because it is just and lawful and demands the full recovery of the Syrian land. We cannot practice oneupmanship on the matter, nor can anyone practice oneupmanship on Syria.

We hope that conditions will allow progress to be made on the Syrian track. Let us wait to see the results of Christopher's imminent visit to the region.

[Al-Butaywi] President Mubarak warned during his recent visit to Britain that the Palestinian problem was becoming more complicated and serious. Can it be said that the problem is still as complicated and serious and has not witnessed anything positive?

[Musa] Yes, it is still complicated. In fact it is becoming more complicated—a very serious matter which could substantially affect the peace process as a whole.

[Al-Butaywi] How do you see President 'Arafat's future in the light of that serious situation?

[Musa] We have confidence in President 'Arafat's ability to overcome the difficulties. Because he is the symbol of the Palestinian march, which has not been completed yet. It cannot be completed except by exercising the right to self-determination. We believe that President 'Arafat is capable of containing the situation. But he needs help, most importantly that Israel honestly implement the declaration of principles, and that the donor states provide the aid and stop talking about the lack of Palestinian cooperation, because it has been proved that the Palestinian Authority has accepted the clarity and accountability issue.

Musa Reports on AMU, CSCE Issues

NC0712133694 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1200 GMT 7 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 7 Dec (MENA)—President Husni Mubarak received a report from Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa during their meeting today. The report dealt with the outcome of his tour to Rabat, Budapest, and Geneva.

In a statement after the meeting, 'Amr Musa said he conveyed a message from Moroccan king Hassan II in reply to a message from President Mubarak. The foreign minister said that Egypt's request to join the Arab Maghreb Union [AMU] as an observer will be discussed by the AMU within the next few months.

Asked about the seminar that will be held in Cairo next year to discuss Arab-European cooperation concerning the area's security, the foreign minister said the seminar will be attended by representatives from Mediterranean states and CSCE member states. The seminar is aimed at promoting cooperation between the two groups and discussing issues of mutual interest.

Pointing to U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's Middle East tour, Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa said he will contact the U.S. secretary concerning the outcome of his tour.

To another question about inter-Arab coordination and solidarity, the foreign minister said: We must be realistic. Arab coordination is currently an important issue, because coordination creates solidarity. Both coordination and solidarity are extremely important and effective during the current stage, Musa added.

Asked about Egyptian moves regarding the Bosnian problem, the foreign minister said they are extremely active because we are fully convinced that the events in Bosnia are wrong and that the policy is wrong and biased in favor of the Serbs. This policy enables the Serbs to occupy the land step by step, Musa added.

He said the ongoing events in Bosnia prompted the International Contact Group to meet in Geneva. It was an important meeting and Egypt was the force behind the statement issued by the Islamic Contact Group. The statement calls for an immediate meeting between the Islamic Contact Group and the International Contact

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Group to discuss developments. But we must wait and see; they might reject the meeting, Musa added.

The foreign minister said that if a meeting on the ministerial level is held between the two groups, it will be an important opportunity to hold official talks among the states that defend the rights of the Bosnian people for survival and legitimate self-defense and the states that look at things from a different angle.

Asked about the Islamic summit conference slated to be held in Casablanca, 'Amr Musa said that Egypt's stance during the summit will focus on promoting the policy Egypt pursued during the Casablanca economic summit. Our contacts are taking place on such a basis. But it is up to the delegates to agree on solving all the projected issues and problems facing the Muslims, the foreign minister said.

Asked about reports that Egypt's AMU membership as an observer would affect its relations with the Arab East, 'Amr Musa stressed that the borders of the five-member AMU states represent Egypt's western border.

'Amr Musa said Egypt wants to be an AMU observer member. Egypt is cooperating and coordinating with the AMU in its capacity as an observer and not as a full member. He noted that this does not contradict, but rather integrates with, Egyptian contacts with the Arab East, including the Damascus Declaration and others.

The foreign minister said those demanding inter-Arab coordination and solidarity are contradicting themselves when they criticize Egypt's moves toward the Arab Maghreb. It is not logical that Egypt should extend its hand to both the Arab East and Arab Maghreb. This is the real solidarity.

Continuing, the foreign minister said that what is important is to maintain the constants of Egyptian policy for the sake of serving Arab reconciliation, solidarity, and coordination. He said the AMU welcomes Egypt's membership as an observer.

Asked about Egypt's efforts to achieve Arab solidarity after Iraq's recognition of Kuwait, the foreign minister said that Iraq's step must be followed by other steps.

Al-Sharif Returns With Message From al-Qadhdhafi

NC0712064694 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 0500 GMT 7 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] President Husni Mubarak is to receive a message from brother Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi, leader of the Libyan revolution. The message will be conveyed to President Mubarak by Information Minister Safwat al-Sharif, who returned to Cairo from Tripoli last night at the conclusion of a visit to the Libyan Jamahiriyah.

Speaking upon his arrival, al-Sharif stated that the Libyan revolution leader's message includes his viewpoint on several issues relating to the Arab Maghreb in general. He noted that Libya's position regarding Egypt's membership of the Arab Maghreb Union is clear and firm.

Al-Sharif noted that during his visit to Libya he handed a message from President Mubarak to brother Col. Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi on Arab affairs and efforts to adopt Arab stances regarding international and regional issues that affect the Arab nation. He conveyed to brother Col. al-Qadhdhafi President Mubarak and Egypt's views on several Arab and regional issues. The information minister added that he briefed the brother colonel on the results of President Mubarak's talks during his recent European tour on the Western-Libyan crisis, better known as the Lockerbie crisis, and other issues of common interest. Al-Sharif added that he briefed the brother colonel on Egypt's current and future contacts on this crisis.

Tunisia

Ben Yahya Welcomes Egypt as AMU Member

NC0712134394 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1230 GMT 7 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Tunis, 7 Dec (MENA)—Ranking diplomatic sources here said today that Tunis welcomes Egypt as a member in the Arab Maghreb Union [AMU].

These sources said that Tunisian Foreign Minister Habib Ben Yahya informed Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa of this in their meeting in Budapest the day before yesterday on the sidelines of the meetings of the Conference for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

The sources added that the Tunisian foreign minister clarified to Musa that the issue, from the Tunisian point of view, lies in applying AMU laws, which contain no clauses allowing observers to join as members. The Tunisian foreign minister told Musa that this requires amending the basic laws of the Union with the approval of the AMU countries' leaders.

The Tunisian foreign minister affirmed to the Egyptian foreign minister, according to these sources, that what has been published by some Tunisian newspapers about Tunis' opposition to Egypt's membership in the AMU does not express the official Tunisian stances, but expresses the viewpoint of these newspapers only.

Defense Budget Increased for 1995

LD0612200994 Tunis Tunisian Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 6 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The Chamber of Deputies devoted its afternoon session to examining the draft budget of the National Defense Ministry for 1995. The newsroom team in the Chamber sends us the details:

[Correspondent] The Chamber of Deputies this afternoon resumed its debates under the chairmanship of Mr. Habib Boulares, and in the presence of Defense Minister

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Mr. Ben Dhia, on the Defense Ministry's draft budget for 1995. The draft budget of the Defense Ministry, for both capital and salary expenditure, amounts to 241,669,000 dinars, i.e an increase of 13,713,000 dinars. [passage omitted]

Satellite Dish Permits Suspended

LD0712164194 Tunis Tunisian Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1300 GMT 7 Dec

[FBIS Translated Text] At a regular news conference yesterday, Communications Minister Habib Lazreg said that the ministry had decided to temporarily suspend the granting of permits for obtaining satellite dishes until that area had been reorganized and unlicensed dishes have been accounted for.

There are 33,000 satellite dishes in Tunisia, 55 percent of which are in the capital, Tunis.

The minister noted that the chaotic development in the sector had been primarily caused by noncompliance to the rules of the 1988 law on aerials used for picking up television programs via satellites, which stipulated that prior permission had to be obtained by importers, manufacturers, sellers, and users; also caused by the insufficiency of the duty charged for permits for private use; and by the fact the practical instructions included in the law did not stipulate the technical requirements that had to be fulfilled for the installation of that kind of equipment in so far as location and way of fixing the equipment were concerned, and the increasing number of people with permits.

He said that that chaotic situation constituted a future threat to the safety of citizens, in addition to tarnishing the beauty of buildings, towns and, in general, the environment.

Habib Lazreg said that the ministry was in the process of filling the legal loophole concerning the requirement for the installation of dishes, and that a law would be decreed, taking into account safety and environmental protection requirements, incentive to obtain collective equipment for blocks and adjoining buildings by offering a reduction in the duty imposed, as well as other incentives offered to citizens who agree to having the equipment installed in their gardens.

He expressed the ministry's readiness to cooperate with local residence associations in this respect, and that there were plans to involve the public in monitoring and decisionmaking.

He said that a substitute to satellite dishes was the cable network distribution, which was expensive but its cost would fall in time.

In the same context, the minister pointed out that El Bhira [district of Tunis] had been equipped with cable, and expressed his ministry's readiness to help people of low-income with cable, and that the ministry would lay the infrastructure at own expense. A register has been prepared for those who wish to subscribe.

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Yemen, Saudi Arabia Engage in Border Dispute

Yemen on Saudi Border 'Actions'

JN0712211094 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 2000 GMT 7 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] A responsible source at the Foreign Ministry has stated the following to the YEMENI NEWS AGENCY, SABA':

The Yemeni Government has always adopted a policy of good neighborliness, noninterference in internal affairs, and working for resolving disputes by peaceful means out of its eagerness that peace, harmony, and amity will prevail among states in general and among neighboring states in particular.

On this basis, the Yemeni Government has not spared any effort to address the fraternal Saudi Government on the need to end the border issues between both countries and resolve them by peaceful means according to the firm bases of the international law and approved international conventions and charters.

Despite these repeated initiatives, the Saudi Government, particularly recently, has carried out actions which encroached upon the Yemeni sovereignty over Yemeni territory by erecting monitoring posts and building a number of roads deep inside Yemeni territory in the following areas:

1. (Jabal al-Musharrit) in the subdistrict of Munabbih; (Jabal al-Mashriq) in the subdistrict of Shada; (Abraqayn), (Tinsab), (Salatah), (Naffutah), and al-Far' in the subdistrict of Futah. All these areas are in the Sa'dah Governorate.

2. The area of Dahyah, 'Uruq Ibn Hamudah, 'Uruq al-Kharkhayr, and (al-Dukakah) in the al-Mahrah Governorate.

While expressing its extreme concern about the relations of fraternity and good neighborliness and about resolving problems peacefully, the Yemeni Government emphasizes its adherence to the sovereignty over its territory and to preserving its legal and historical rights. It also hopes that its positive initiatives and previous positions will receive a good response from the Saudi Government for the sake of safeguarding the relations of fraternity and good neighborliness between both sisterly peoples who are linked by the ties of kinsfolk—the tolerant Islamic creed.

Saudi Official Responds to Allegations

LD0812083294 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 0410 GMT 8 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Riyadh, 7 Dec [date as received]—With reference to what the Yemeni news agency transmitted and reported by Sanaa radio, quoting a responsible source at the Yemeni Foreign Ministry this evening, Wednesday [7 December], about some remarks in the statement of the aforementioned source in connection with the Saudi-Yemeni border:

A responsible source told SPA this evening that "proceeding from its firm policy of maintaining good neighborliness, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is intent on resolving all conflicts peacefully in order to spread peace, love, and harmony between it and all brothers."

Concerning the fraternal Republic of Yemen, the kingdom has always endeavored to resolve the border issues between the two countries by agreeable means for everyone in accordance with the principles of international law, covenants, and conventions, to which the Yemeni statement has referred.

The source added that "concerning what the responsible official at the Yemeni Foreign Ministry said about the creation of observation points and the building of roads on Yemeni territory, and despite the fact that the concerned Saudi (?authorities) confirmed that those structures were indeed on Saudi territory, correspondence and contacts took place in connection with this between the officials in the two countries at ministerial level. In its turn, the kingdom welcomes the formation of a joint fact-finding committee from the two countries to examine these events. [no close quotation marks as received]

At the end of his statement, the source said that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia renews its constant interest in fraternal relations and good neighborliness, and in resolving issues peacefully, which is a pivotal point in its foreign policy with all brothers.

GCC Economic Ministers Hold Meeting in Riyadh

Saudi Minister Opens Session

LD0612220694 Riyadh Saudi Arabian Television Network in Arabic 1830 GMT 6 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Their Excellencies the finance and national economy ministers of the GCC [Gulf Cooperation Council] countries this evening started the proceedings of the 37th session of the GCC financial and economic cooperation committee under the chairmanship of His Excellency Muhammad Aba al-Khayl, finance and national economy minister, at the headquarters of the general secretariat in Riyadh. [passage omitted]

Ministers End Meetings

LD0712131194 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1116 GMT 7 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Riyadh, 7 Dec—This afternoon the finance and national economy ministers of the GCC [Gulf Cooperation Council] countries concluded the meetings of the 37th session of the financial and economic committee of GCC countries at the council's

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general secretariat in Riyadh under the chairmanship of His Excellency Muhammad al-'Ali Aba-al-Khayl, finance and national economy minister.

Bahrain

Iranian First Deputy Foreign Minister Visits

Meets With Amir

LD0712155094 Tehran IRNA in English 1331 GMT 7 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Dec. 7, IRNA—The first deputy foreign minister, Mohammad Hashemi, said in Manama Wednesday [7 December] that confidence, cooperation and solidarity betweeen the Persian Gulf littoral states are requisites for a lasting peace and security in the region and welfare of the regional nations.

In a meeting with Bahraini Amir Shaykh 'Isa Bin-Salman Al Khalifah, Hashemi said that the most of the regional problems will be solved once the regional states exchanged brotherly and friendly messages with each other rather than launch propaganda against one another. He said that the Islamic Republic of Iran was ready to cooperate with Bahrain in all areas.

Al Khalifah called on the regional states to tackle the problems in an atmosphere of confidence appropriate for political cooperation in the region. Bahraini amir said that opening of a new chapter for friendship and solidarity between the Persian Gulf littoral states is of great significance.

Meets With Foreign Minister

JN0612174594 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1100 GMT 6 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Manama, 6 Dec (WAKH)—Bahraini Foreign Minister Shaykh Muhammad Bin-Mubarak Al Khalifah received in Manama today Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Mohammad Hashemi, who is currently visiting Bahrain.

Discussions dealt with views on a number of issues that concern the two countries, led by bilateral relations of friendship and cooperation, the situation in the Gulf region, and ways of safeguarding its security and stability.

The meeting was attended by Ghazi al-Qusaybi, Foreign Ministry's undersecretary; the Iranian ambassador to Bahrain; and Ibrahim al-Majid, adviser at the foreign minister's office.

Saudi Arabia

Minister Reaffirms Continuing Support to Bosnia

LD0712162994 Riyadh SPA in English 1241 GMT 7 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Geneva, Dec 7, SPA—Saudi Minister of State Muhammed Ibrahim Mas'ud, has re-affirmed Saudi Arabia's continuing support to the Bosnian cause and said it has been doing its best to settle the Bosnian problem.

Mas'ud is also a member of the Saudi Cabinet and head of the Kingdom's delegation to a meeting of foreign ministers of the Islamic Contact Group on Bosnia-Herzegovina, which began its deliberations in Geneva last night by focusing on quick ways of tackling the deteriorating situation in Bihac.

In an address before the Contact Group participants, Mas'ud said this meeting had been convened at a crucial time for the Bosnian people who face a vicious war of racial cleansing imposed on them by the Serb forces that are supported by Serbia and Montenegro, he said.

"An open failure to execute the necessary sanctions and procedures, has encouraged the Serbs to go ahead with their aggression. What is happening in the besieged Bihac constitutes a fearful ordeal. It is taking place despite the fact that Bihac is one of the secured zones declared in line with the resolutions 824 and 836 adopted by the Security Council. Despite the difficulties the Bosnians are bravely facing the barbaric aggression," the Saudi minister of state said.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, realizing its religious and historical responsibility, has been extending moral and material support to the Bosnians, Mas'ud said. Until November 30, 1994, the donations collected by the Kingdom-based higher commission for collection of donations for the muslims in Bosnia-Herzegovina amounted to SR [Saudi Rials] 175 million, while the relief materials extended by the higher commission to the Bosnians exceeded a volume of 20 million tons.

Mas'ud said the Kingdom also extends about 500 million [currency not specified] in financial aid in addition to medical supplies and foodstuffs to the Bosnians.

At the level of the political support, Mas'ud said Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Fahd Bin-'abd-al-'Aziz along with brothers and friends, had been exerting efforts at the regional and international platforms to urge the international community for taking effective measures to preserve Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Following the besiege of Bihac, the Saudi monarch has sent messages to the members of the Security Council and other countries like Germany, urging them to take urgent and effective measures to counter the aggression, Mas'ud elaborated.

"The Bosnian Muslims have accepted the peace plan proposed by the international Contact Group which stipulate the partition of Bosnia- Herzegovina—51 percent for the Bosnians and Croatians and 49 percent for the Serbs because they are keen on co-existence with the other parties. But, in violation of the U.N. resolutions, the Serbs have opted to continue launching aggressions," the Saudi minister of state said.

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Mas'ud said the latest proposal of the international Contact Group at its meeting in Brussels will pave the way for the establishment of Greater Serbia, adding that this will further deprive the Muslims of their legitimate rights.

"Such a proposal will disrupt the credibility of the international Contact Group and will constitute a flagrant violation of the principles of the international convention," the Saudi minister of state added. He called on to go ahead with the implementation of the previous recommendations and underlined the importance of the participation of the Organization of the Islamic Conference in the activities of the international Contact Group.

"The Serbs do not honour their pledges and continue their aggression and attacks on the Bosnians. The international community should firmly stand against the Serbs and deter them. If the international community fails to shoudler its responsibility towards the ordeal of the Bosnians, then Bosnia should be excluded from the resolution which stipulates arms embargo on the former Yugoslavia," the Saudi minister of state said.

Mas'ud also called for authorization of the U.N. peacekeeping forces to resort to force so as to deter the aggressor.

Foreign Minister Urges Policy Change in Bosnia

MS0812095594 London THE INDEPENDENT in English 8 Dec 94 p 12

[Report on interview with Foreign Minister Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz by Michael Sheridan in Riyadh; date not given]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Riyadh—Saudi Arabia, reflecting anger over Bosnia throughout the Islamic world, said yesterday that international policy had failed and called for a complete change of course.

The Saudi Foreign Minister, Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, said in an interview with the Independent that UN troops should have their rules of engagement changed or be withdrawn.

He said the position of the Muslim-led Bosnian government had been steadily worn away and the arms embargo imposed on it should now be lifted. "The four elements of the policy have not worked," he said. "The UN forces cannot deliver humanitarian aid. The safe havens are not safe havens—they are being fired upon and attacked. The embargo has not stopped the conflict. All it has done is to prevent the defenders acquiring weapons to defend themselves. And in the negotiations we see the Serbs constantly increasing their demands."

Saudi Arabia has played a low-key role so far and Prince Sa'ud noted that it has supported all the international peace plans, including the latest proposal from the five-nation contact group, albeit with reservations. Saudi Arabia, however, believed the Muslim cause needed help on the battlefield. "We do not see a solution without a military balance," he said.

He noted drily that the Islamic nations had recognised Bosnia and the other states of the former Yugoslavia only after the Western European nations had already done so. "You recognise a state and then you allow aggression against it," he said. "We don't understand it."

Prince Sa'ud said consistent air support should be given to the Bosnian government forces and they should be allowed to get arms. "Either you provide somebody with collective security or you allow him to defend himself," Prince Sa'ud added.

Saudi Arabia has already indicated it would be ready to supply weapons to the Bosnian government when the embargo was lifted.

United Arab Emirates

Minister Meets Gorbachev, Iran President Adviser

JN0612173894 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1130 GMT 6 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Dubayy, 6 Dec (WAKH)—General Muhammad Bin-Rashid Al Maktum, defense minister of the United Arab Emirates, met in Dubayy today with Mikhail Gorbachev, former Soviet president, who was accompanied by 'Ali Nasir Muhammad, former president of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen.

Shaykh Muhammd Bin-Rashid Al Maktum and Gorbachev discussed a number of international issues in light of the new world order.

Shaykh Rashid also received today Morteza al-Wiri [name as transliterated], adviser to the Iranian president and chairman of the free zones in Iran. Discussions dealt with the role of free zones in the economic development process and ways of encouraging industrial investments in these zones.

Shaykh Muhammad also met today with Shaykh Muhammad Bin-Hamad Al Thani, adviser to his highness the amir of Qatar, and discussed bilateral relations.

Islands Issue May Be Referred to International Court

MM0812103694 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 7 Dec 94 pp 1, 4

[Report by Tajj-al-Din 'Abd-al-Haqq: "Emirates Renews Its Insistence on Referring Islands Issue to Court of Justice"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Abu Dhabi—Well-informed sources said in Abu Dhabi yesterday that the United Arab Emirates [UAE] has not abandoned the idea of

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referring the issue of the three islands—Tunb al-Kubra, Tunb al-Sughra, and Abu Musa—to the International Court of Justice [ICJ].

The sources said that there has been nothing new to prompt the UAE to backtrack on its position, namely that the issue should be referred to international arbitration. In fact the idea is gaining strength because of the support it is receiving from Gulf and Arab states and numerous foreign states.

Commenting on Iranian Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati's statement—in which he described UAE President Shaykh Zayid Bin-Sultan Al Nuhayyan's call last Friday for an objective and constructive dialogue as a positive indication of the UAE's willingness to resume bilateral negotiations—the sources said that the UAE has never been against objective dialogue. It has from the outset defined its options to settle its dispute with Iran through all available peaceful means. It started by inviting Iran to a bilateral dialogue over the islands. But Iran always rejected this dialogue. It insisted on limiting this dialogue to some results of its military occupation of the UAE islands, such as the administration of Abu Musa island, without broaching the issue of sovereignty over the three islands as a whole.

The sources said that Shaykh Zayid's call for an objective and constructive dialogue does not mean that the UAE could "agree to enter the same vicious circle it experienced in its previous attempts to initiate a bilateral dialogue with Iran over the three islands."

The sources added that the UAE turned to the idea of referring the issue to the ICJ only when all possible efforts to hold a bilateral dialogue had been exhausted.

The sources said that the possibility of resuming the bilateral dialogue depends on Iran's seriousness in accepting the idea of holding a dialogue over the issue of sovereignty over the three islands and taking tangible steps to demonstrate this seriousness.

The sources pointed out in this context that the UAE is not prepared to backtrack on its position, namely that the issue should be referred to the ICJ, while Iran is trying—through a series of measures—to perpetuate its occupation of the three islands by trying to make changes in the administrative and demographic structure there. These changes are represented in the recent appointment of a military governor for Abu Musa island, the building of an airport, and the establishment of courts in the island—which confirms Iran's continued plans to perpetuate the occupation.

Sayf Sa'id, under secretary at the UAE Foreign Ministry, said in a statement following the meeting of the under secretaries of the Gulf Cooperation Council foreign ministries, held in Manama, that the UAE will submit to the next Gulf summit scheduled to be held in Bahrain a working paper on the islands which will include the steps taken by the UAE to solve the islands issue peacefully by referring it to the ICJ.

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Sudanese Ministers Arrive for Visit, Meetings

Meet With Saddam Husayn

JN0712193794 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 7 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] His Excellency leader President Saddam Husayn, may he enjoy God's care and attention, has received 'Abdallah Hasan Ahmad, Sudan's minister of finance and head of the Sudanese side to the joint Iraqi-Sudanese committee, and Nasr-al-Din Muhammad 'Umar, minister of state for trade and industry [title as heard] in the brotherly Sudan.

The ministers conveyed to his excellency greetings from his brother Lieutenant General 'Umar Hasan al-Bashir, president of the brotherly Republic of Sudan. Al-Bashir's message expressed wishes of good health to his excellency the president and sustained progress and success for the Iraqi people. The leader president asked the ministers to pass his greetings and best wishes to the Sudanese people and leadership.

The session was attended by Finance Minister Ahmad Husayn Khudayyir.

Meet With Vice President Ramadan

JN0812125294 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0925 GMT 8 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 8 Dec (INA)—Vice President Taha Yasin Ramadan has received 'Abdallah Hasan Ahmad, Sudan's minister of finance and head of the Sudanese side to the joint Iraqi-Sudanese committee, and Nasr-al-Din Muhammad 'Umar, minister of state for trade and industry affairs, in Sudan.

Taha Yasin Ramadan said, during the meeting, that discussing aspects of cooperation between Iraq and Sudan and the meetings of the joint Iraqi-Sudanese committee affirm both countries' concern to maintain their relations and to develop them in the service of their pan-Arab policies.

Both sides reviewed bilateral relations and ways to develop and expand them.

Joint Committee Meets

JN0712194494 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 7 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] The Iraqi-Sudanese joint cooperation committee today resumed its meetings in the course of its 10th round to discuss prospects for further bilateral cooperation.

The committee looked into ways to diversify and further two-way trade. It considered ways to remove the obstacles hindering the smooth flow of trade. The sides also explored the prospect of taking part in international exhibitions held in Iraq and Sudan.

They talked about Iraqi requirements of Sudanese goods and cooperation between the chambers of commerce in the two brotherly states.

Saddam Son-in-Law Named 'Antidemagogy' Force Head

JN0712121994 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Kurdistan in Arabic 1600 GMT 6 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] AL-MU'TAMAR newspaper, the central newspaper of the Unified Iraqi National Congress has said that the head of the ruling regime in Baghdad appointed his son-in-law, Saddam Kamil, to head the new security institution he calls the antidemagogy force. The newspaper cites an exclusive source as saying that Saddam Kamil was promoted to staff lieutenant colonel and was granted a special budget to train selected elements from the intelligence service and the special security organ to send them to the southern areas and the marshlands to infiltrate into the ranks of opposition groups working there and to become acquainted with their field leaders and to collect information on the sizes of these groups, their armed formations, their ammunition, and the way they operate.

French National Front Delegation Arrives on Visit

Meets With Assembly Speaker

JN0612165594 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1402 GMT 6 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 6 Dec (INA)—National Assembly Speaker Sa'di Mahdi Salih met today with Bruno Colonich [name as transliterated], vice president of the French National Front and member of the European Parliament, and his delegation.

The National Assembly speaker said that the Iraqi people's suffering as a result of the acute scarcity of food and medicine because of the unjust blockade imposed on them has become a terrifying tragedy. He indicated that the United States makes high-sounding statements about human rights at a time when the children and elderly of Iraq are being subjected to the cruelest blockade in modern history.

Sa'di Mahdi Salih indicated that Iraq and France have old relations of friendship governed by numerous factors and joint objectives. He said this requires France to support the Iraqi people and do everything possible to lift the unfair blockade and end their suffering.

Bruno Colonish said that the blockade imposed on the people of Iraq is a heinous crime which requires all free people in the world to stand by Iraq and its proud people in order to lift it since Iraq has honored all its obligations toward the UN Security Council resolutions.

Bruno Colonish arrived in the country last night on a visit of several days to Iraq at the invitation of the Iraqi National Assembly.

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Meets National Assembly Committee

JN0712200794 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 7 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] The National Assembly's Arab and International Relations Committee today convened a session with a visiting French National Front [NF] delegation. They examined the possibilities for increased cooperation between the NF and the National Assembly so as to advance the interests of the two friendly peoples. Also reviewed was the Front's regional and global effort to get the unjust sanctions removed, now that Iraq has fulfilled all the obligations mandated by UN Security Council resolutions.

Talabani Receives Former Military Intelligence Chief

NC0712163694 (Clandestine) Voice of the People of Kurdistan in Arabic 1605 GMT 7 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] At 1300 yesterday in his special residence in Irbil, Brother Jalal Talabani, secretary general of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan [PUK], received Dr. Ahmad al-Shalabi, chairman of the Executive Council of the Unified Iraqi National Congress [UINC], and Staff Maj. Gen. Wafiq al-Samarra'i, former chief of Iraqi military intelligence who recently took refuge in Kurdistan and joined the UINC. The two-hour meeting was attended by PUK Political Bureau members Sa'd Ma'sum, Kusrat Rasul, Faraydun 'Abd-al-Qadir, and 'Umar Fattah.

INC Studying Formation of Government-in-Exile

LD0612182194 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 1703 GMT 6 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] London, 6 Dec—The Iraqi National Congress [INC] said here today that it has been decided to set up a special committee to study a proposal to form a provisional [Iraqi] government-in-exile. In a statement, the INC said that the decision was taken following a series of meetings held by the INC leadership in Salah al-Din in north Iraq over many days. It said that an agreement was reached on "strengthening resistance and escalating struggle against the dictatorial regime of Saddam Husayn."

The statement pointed out that the leadership welcomed the resolution No 949 adopted by the UN Security Council following the recent massing of Iraqi troops near the Kuwaiti border, which condemned the troop massing and called for an immediate withdrawal to their previous positions. The statement added that the [INC] leadership expressed concern over what it described as pressure exerted by a number of commercial companies trading in oil sector on some governments "to reach agreements with the dictatorial regime and to offer it financial and political privileges."

The INC statement pointed out that "the Iraqi regime and its legitimate political institutions will not honor any trade deals Saddam reached with foreign companies."

It is worth mentioning that the INC is an umbrella organization of various Iraqi opposition groups from north and south Iraq [established at a conference in Vienna in June 1992].

Unified Iraqi National Congress Issues Statement

JN0812104894 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Kurdistan in Arabic 1600 GMT 6 Dec 94

[Press statement issued at the conclusion of the seventh joint session by the Presidential Council and the Executive Board of the Unified Iraqi National Congress in Salah-al-Din on 5 December]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Presidential Council and the Executive Board of the Unified Iraqi National Congress [UINC] have concluded their seventh joint session, which was held in Salah-al- Din between 28 November and 4 December. A number of National Assembly members attended the meeting in order to expand the base of decisionmaking. Jalal Talabani, secretary general of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, attended part of the session.

The session reviewed domestic conditions inside Iraq and the increasing popular struggle against the dictatorial authority. The session discussed the means to pool efforts and mass resources to expedite the toppling of the ruling regime, end the Iraqi people's dilemma, and establish the state of law and democracy. The session urged religious scholars, tribal chiefs, professionals, intellectuals, writers, and artists to escalate the struggle against dictatorship and to tighten the siege against it.

The session discussed the conditions of the Armed Forces and made a series of decisions and recommendations to ensure that they fulfill their national duty. The session urged all military leaders to shoulder their responsibilities and work with the UINC forces to end the Iraqis' dilemma, which is caused by dictatorship, poverty, and injustice. The session underlined the UINC's course and its declared positions regarding general amnesty, clemency, and protecting the prestige of the judiciary and the law.

The session discussed the deteriorating living standards of the people. The session held the regime fully responsible for this situation that was caused by its adventurous and irresponsible policy, which led to the maintenance of international sanctions, and by its refusal to implement UN Security Council Resolutions 706 and 712. The session drafted plans to escalate the campaign demanding the implementation of Resolutions 706, 712 and 788. The session reaffirmed the call to dispatch UN observers to prevent human rights violations and to take advantage of Resolution 949, which obliged the regime to facilitate UN operations in Iraq, particularly relief operations in the South.

On the regional level, the session reaffirmed the UINC's keenness on strengthening and bolstering ties and cooperation with all neighboring states. The session made a

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number of decisions and recommendations in this regard, stressing that the post-Saddam Iraq will respect the ties of good neighborliness and joint interests. In this regard, the session stressed that foreign aggression and domestic repression are two pillars of the ruling regime and that the continuity of that regime poses a permanent threat to security and stability in the region and the world, and to the international resolutions and laws, which the UINC respects.

On the international level, the session made a number of decisions and recommendations to appeal to the world community and to mobilize world public opinion to support the Iraqi people. The session highly appreciated the position of the friendly nations. It stressed that the aggressor and the tyrant rulers must not be rewarded. The session affirmed that the international response to the recent threats against sisterly Kuwait were aimed at protecting its sovereignty and internationally-recognized borders, but did not develop to the point of protecting the Iraqi people from the regime's suppression. In this regard, the session welcomed the U.S. and British interpretation of Resolution 949 which warns the regime against attacking the north and south under the provisions of Clause Seven, under which the said resolution was taken.

The session also expressed concern about the fact that certain governments are yielding to pressure from their companies, particularly those trading in oil, and the move to strike deals, sign agreements, and offer financial and political privileges to the dictatorial regime in the hope that they can obtain short-sighted economic gains at the expense of the Iraqi people's suffering and the region's security. In this regard, the session warned that the Iraqi people and their elected constitutional institutions will not respect any trade agreement Saddam signs with the foreign companies under the regime of the world sanctions imposed by the United Nations which prohibit such deals.

The session strongly denounced the campaigns of terror, repression, and detention in Iraqi cities, particularly in Mosul, Karkuk, and al-Anbar, and the savage human rights violations. The session denounced the recent legislations decreed by the dictator on tattooing and the severing of hands and feet. The session appreciated the efforts and positions of [Max van der] Stoel, the special human rights commissioner in Iraq, and his cooperation with the UINC's human rights bureau.

The session also discussed the difficult health and living conditions facing the new and old refugees in the border areas with Iran which are due to the increasing suppression and repression. It made a host of decisions to alleviate their suffering and address their problems. The session appealed to the Iranian Government to provide humanitarian aid to them and receive a delegation from the UINC to discuss this issue. The session further urged the friendly governments and the humanitarian organizations to provide aid to all of our Iraqi people.

The session also discussed practical steps aiming at escalating the political, media, and field struggle. It adopted recommendations in this regard in the light of the domestic, regional, and international developments.

The session also discussed a proposal to establish a provisional government on the soil of the homeland within the framework of a general working plan, taking into account the related objective conditions and factors. In view of the importance of this subject, the session decided to set up a committee to discuss the proposal from political, legal, diplomatic, financial, and military aspects.

The session discussed means to improve the work of the UINC and activating its constitutional institutions and protecting and strengthening them to guarantee the democratic, public course and the national cohesion inside and outside the UINC. In this regard, the session decided to call on the National Assembly to meet in April and to start taking practical steps to ensure the convening of that meeting. The session also took a number of decisions to expand the base of participation in the UINC and to activate its institutions and bureaus.

The session blessed the political settlement reached by the concerned parties in the Iraqi Kurdistan and urged the implementation of agreements and treaties in letter and spirit. It stressed that the important thing is to implement, respect, and translate these agreements into reality.

The session urged the friendly countries and the humanitarian organizations to offer humanitarian and economic aid to our Kurdish people to help them face the difficult conditions.

The conferees hailed the distinguished and effective role played by the UINC leadership to stop the fighting, disengage troops, and ensure the return of things in Iraqi Kurdistan to normal, thus strengthening Iraqi national cohesion and underlining the facts of history and the common struggle.

[Signed] The Unified Iraqi National Congress

[Dated] 5 December 1994

'Muslim Combatants' Warn of Retaliation Against MKO

LD0712225194 Tehran IRNA in English 2222 GMT 7 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Dec. 7, IRNA—Agents of the terrorist Mojahedin-e Khalq organization (MKO) opened fire on a taxi killing the driver and two passengers as the taxi broke down on its way from al-Ghalabiyah to al-Rashidiyah in northern Iraq on November 21, [clandestine] revolutionary Iraq radio has said.

The radio quoting the eyewitnesses said that the terrorist MKO agents, patrolling the road in two vehicles and

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armed with automatic weapons, opened fire on the taxi and killed the driver and two passengers.

According to the radio, following the terrorist operation the terrorist MKO in a statement claimed that the passengers of the taxi had intended to carry out an operation against them.

Meanwhile Iraqi Muslim combatants issued a statement appealing to Baghdad officials to probe into the incident and take punitive measures against those responsible for the crime. They also warned the terrorist MKO of retaliatory measures by Muslim combatants.

The MKO members, due to their contribution to suppression of northern Iraqi people following the Persian Gulf war and invasion of Kuwait, have been attacked by Muslim combatants. Ex-MKO members say that the insecurity for the terrorist MKO has increased the number of deserting members from the terrorist grouplet.

U.S. 'Violations' of Airspace Protested to UN

3-23 Nov Cited

NC0212175094 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1715 GMT 2 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] New York, 2 Dec (INA)—Iraq has protested to the UN over violations of its airspace by U.S. spy aircraft.

Iraq's permanent delegate to the UN today handed a message in this regard to UN Secretary General Butrus-Ghali from Iraqi Foreign Minister Muhammad Sa'id al-Sahhaf. The message indicates that U.S. U-2 spy aircraft violated Iraq's airspace four times—on 3, 9, 17, and 23 November. The message points out this brings the number of violations by such aircraft to 231.

It stressed the need to use Iraqi rather than foreign means [al-wasa'il] in the work of the Special Commission to preclude any possibility of these means being used for purposes infringing on Iraq's sovereignty [sentence as received].

21-30 Nov Cited

JN0512183294 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1130 GMT 5 Nov 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Iraq has again protested to the United Nations over U.S. aircraft violations of Iraqi airspace for provocation and surveillance and on missions to drop flares.

In a memorandum addressed to the UN secretary general yesterday, Iraq's permanent envoy to the United Nations said these aircraft violated Iraqi airspace in the period between 21-30 November and carried out 740 hostile sorties over various parts of the country.

The Iraqi permanent envoy asked that the memorandum be circulated as a UN Security Council document.

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Rabin: Media 'Calm' Conducive to Syrian Progress

TA0712164994 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1500 GMT 7 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin met with Secretary of State Warren Christopher today. At the conclusion of their meeting, the prime minister said that there had been no significant change in Syria's position. Mr. Christopher said that based on his meeting with President Hafiz al-Asad yesterday, he could definitely state that there was a real opportunity to achieve peace between Syria and Israel. Our political correspondent Udi Segal reports:

[Begin recording] [Segal] Coming out of a meeting with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher this morning, Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin said that there had still been no movement in Syria's inflexible position. Although Rabin noted that it was still premature to discuss substantive or procedural issues—or in other words any change in the framework of the talks—the prime minister's tone was soft and conciliatory. This perhaps is Christopher's major achievement: restoring things to normal and soothing tensions between Damascus and Jerusalem. Rabin spoke about the information Christopher brought from Damacus but would not specify any details. The prime minister's remarks mainly focused on atmospherics.

[Rabin] The report the secretary brought from Damascus.... [pauses] If we can calm things down especially in the media, and this depends on us not on you, then I am convinced that creating a more comfortable, pleasant, and relaxed atmosphere—with fewer bombastic declarations—will enable the restoration of a climate more conducive to progress. [passage omitted] [end recording]

Rabin Said To Accept U.S. Plan for Syrian Track

TA0812123394 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew 8 Dec 94 pp 4, 5

[Report by Hemi Shalev]

[FBIS Translated Text] The United States has worked out a plan aimed at bringing about a breakthrough in the Israeli-Syrian negotiations. The main component of this plan is a new public statement by President al-Asad in which he would go into the details of the "substance of peace" and the normalization in relations with Israel after a peace agreement is signed.

Following al-Asad's statement Prime Minister Rabin is slated to make his own statement expanding Israel's commitment for a withdrawal on the Golan Heights beyond what has been stated in all the public statements so far.

It has been learned that the prime minister has already accepted the American plan and told Christopher that he will adequately "repay" al-Asad if he does not disappoint him as he has in the past.

According to the plan, following the mutual statements an "accelerated and businesslike" negotiations process will commence in which all components of the Israeli "peace package" will be discussed, namely, withdrawal, security arrangements, normalization, and the relationship among these components. These negotiations will apparently be held within the framework of work teams in Washington in a bid to reach a satisfactory conclusion within several months.

The Americans are maintaining contacts with Syria regarding the content of al-Asad's statement, which is slated to include three main components: Syria's disassociating itself from terrorism, al-Asad's reiterating his "strategic" commitment to reach peace with Israel, and his detailing for the first time the components of the peace arrangement with Israel.

The Americans said they will closely work with Syria so that al-Asad's statement may achieve the desirable effect on Israeli public opinion, thus preventing it from having a counterproductive effect as was the case with Foreign Minister al-Shar's interview to Israel TV or with al-Asad's joint news conference with President Clinton in Damascus.

In his meetings in Jerusalem yesterday, Christopher said he was encouraged by al-Asad's and Rabin's reaction to the U.S. plan, adding that this allows the continuation of his shuttle mission in the region. Israeli political sources assess that the United States intends to bring the plan to fruition in early January 1995, after the New Year holiday.

Christopher yesterday told President Weizman, Prime Minister Rabin, and Foreign Minister Peres that he feels that during his present shuttle he managed to "clear the murky atmosphere" between Israel and the United States on the one hand and Syria on the other, following the unsuccessful meeting between Clinton and al-Asad last month. "The situation on the ground is much better than what I have read in the newspapers," he said.

Christopher said that now, before the American plan is implemented, the sides will return to "business as usual" in the form of the negotiations in Washington between Ambassadors Rabinovich and al-Mu'allim.

Christopher and his team are apparently concerned about the political situation in Israel and fear the possibility of "changes that might put the peace process in a tailspin."

Although the Americans did not clearly refer to the possibility of the Likud's coming to power, their interlocutors gained the impression that this is what they meant.

Christopher said that he told al-Asad it is dangerous to wait until the next election campaign, because a political changeover in Israel could change the entire peacemaking structure in the Middle East.

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Rabin Discusses Peace Accord With Palestinians

AU0712155694

[FBIS Editorial Report] Vienna NEWS in German on 7 December on pages 42 and 43 carries a 1,200-word "exclusive" interview with Nobel Peace Prize winner Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin, conducted by actor Peter Ustinov in Jerusalem on behalf of NEWS and the Norwegian television on the occasion of the upcoming official presentation of the Nobel Peace Prize.

Asked what the Peace Nobel prize means for him, Rabin replies: "The Nobel Peace Prize is very nice, but real peace in the true sense of the word has not yet been achieved. The peace agreement that we concluded with the Palestinians and the Jordanians will not be consolidated until people in the streets, the ordinary citizens see the results of the diplomatic negotiations. This will be the real test for participation by the international community in peace."

Referring to the reasons that made the agreement possible, the prime minister mentions the "collapse of the Soviet empire, the bankruptcy of communism, the end of the Cold War, the crisis in the Gulf, and the unshakeable position of the United States." In addition, the Israeli Labor Party, which assumed power in 1992, succeeded in "making use of this unique historic constellation."

Commenting on obstacles that make the implementation of the peace agreement difficult, Rabin states: "Israel is not negotiating with democratic and stable countries. Changes within the leadership can entail changes in politics. For this reason, there can be no real peace without assuming certain risks. My strategic decision as prime minister was whether 'Arafat's Al Fatah can be accepted as a partner for negotiations or not. In 1993 I realized that there are only two options: 'Arafat or the increasingly strong fundamentalist forces."

Asked about the danger of terrorist attacks by Hamas fundamentalists, the prime minister stresses that the Israelis are "worried about their security in everyday life. The terrorist activities of the Islamic extremists are aimed at killing the Israelis and, above all, at stopping the peace process." A great deal will depend on "how the Palestinians deal with terrorism and whether they are capable of using the donations for an economic upswing," Rabin emphasizes.

Asked whether his military training helped him to successfully conclude the peace negotiations, Rabin says that he believes that it contributed to "convincing the Israeli people that the risks have been calculated. The questions is what price we are paying for peace. Today there is one enemy that endangers peace—terrorism by extreme Islamic fundamentalists. Just look what is happening in Algeria or Egypt." Referring to terrorist activities by Israeli extremists, the prime minister stresses that "I have ordered the arrest of extremist Israelis who supported the cruel massacre of Hebron during which praying Muslims were killed."

Peres Views Conditions for Successful Peace

AU0712155994

[FBIS Editorial Report] Vienna NEWS in German on 7 December on pages 44 and 44 carries a 1,000-word "exclusive" interview with Nobel Peace Prize winner Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres, conducted by actor Peter Ustinov in Jerusalem on behalf of NEWS and the Norwegian television on the occasion of the upcoming official presentation of the Nobel Peace Prize. The interview is entitled "Pessimism? Luxury!"

Asked when he first thought about initiating peace negotiations, Peres replies: "After the Gulf war, I felt: This must finally be the end to violence in the Middle East. Wars and armies used to be important. However, the sources of strength and wealth are no longer of a material but of an intellectual nature. Armies cannot contribute to more wisdom."

Discussing the importance of young people for the peace process, the foreign minister points out that "there are two Middle Easts. One is under 18 and the other is over 18. Unfortunately, the older is too conventional and has too many prejudices. If Judaism has a message, it is optimism." At present, the Israeli Government is pursuing two goals: "One is an economic goal, aimed at modernizing the economy, and the second is modern education for our children in the kindergartens, in schools, and at the universities. It must become completely irrelevant where one comes from. Everybody must have the opportunity to find his place in a completely new society. Only then will peace be possible."

Asked about his vision for the Middle East, the foreign minister states that he has "no visions. I see things the way they really are." When Ustinov describes him as the "most authentic prophet" he has ever seen, Peres says: "Prophecies consist of two things: One is the courage to see everything as it is, and the other is the wisdom to understand prophecies."

Cabinet To Continue Debate on Interim Accord

TA0712164894 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1500 GMT 7 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] The cabinet will continue discussing the interim accord with the Palestinians tomorrow. At today's session, Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres criticized intelligence officials who presented a grim picture of the situation in the Gaza Strip. Nevertheless, upon leaving the meeting, Peres denied this to waiting correspondents. Our political correspondent Udi Segal reports:

[Begin recording] [Segal] Not all the ministers had time to speak in the political debate regarding the interim arrangement at today's cabinet session. They will be able

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to express their views when the cabinet debate continues tomorrow. At the beginning of today's meeting, Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres sharply criticized intelligence sources who in his view had drawn an exaggerated picture of the situation in the Gaza Strip. Such talk could bury the Oslo agreement, Peres said. The foreign minister noted that he did not need situation reports to know that things were bad. So what, he asked. What is the solution, Peres asked, reacting to the bleak picture painted by the heads of the Shin Bet and the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] Intelligence Branch.

[Peres] This bleak picture was presented by both the intelligence services and the Foreign and Defense Ministries. This gloomy state of affairs was created by our predecessors. Did the Oslo agreement create this grim situation? The Oslo Agreement is trying to resolve this mess. So what is the point? Are we all painters? We have to think about the options we have, and make some suggestions. What are we talking about? Is this an art exhibition? Nor am I certain whether all the predictions regarding the future will indeed transpire. I will not engage in arguments nor comment about assessments. I am only concerned with the practical side of things. That is all that interests me.

[Segal] In reaction, Minister Shim'on Shetrit asserted that intelligence officials had to state the truth and present the facts. Minister Yosi Sarid proposed to announce the start of the IDF's redeployment in Judaea and Samaria and carry out any necessary changes during the actual process. Minister Rubinstein talked about 'Arafat implementing security commitments, and Minister Ya'aqov Tzur spoke explicitly about the necessity of relocating settlements in Judaea and Samaria.

[Tzur] The Qatif Bloc model should be implemented in additional settlement areas such as the Jordan Rift Valley, the northern part of the Dead Sea, the 'Etzyon Bloc, and other blocs. This would guarantee the security of those areas. Second, in the future we will be able to relocate isolated settlements in distant areas into those blocs.

[Segal] Police Minister Moshe Shahal raised a new-old idea: replacing IDF troops in West Bank towns with policemen. First of all, Shahal said, this idea had been found acceptable by Dr. Nabil Sha'th.

[Shahal] Responsibility for routine security and traffic axes will be placed in the hands of security forces which will be composed of Border Police and Israel Police units. These are civilian forces which have been trained for such tasks, and they will be able to cooperate with the Palestinian Police which will receive limited responsibility for the personal security of the Palestinians in these areas.

[Segal] Minister Mikha Harish proposed implementing the next stage under Israeli responsibility and Minister Shim'on Shetrit reiterated his opposition to the IDF's withdrawal from West Bank towns. Tomorrow, when the debate is concluded, the cabinet will reach a general decision on upholding its commitment to the implementation of the Oslo agreement while drawing conclusions from the situation in the Gaza Strip and Jericho. [end recording]

Labor Ministers on Shahal's Reshuffle Offer

TA0712183894 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1605 GMT 7 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Police Minister Moshe Shahal yesterday suggested that the prime minister reshuffle his cabinet ministers. Our correspondent Shmu'el Tal spoke to several ministers who told him that Shahal made the remarks because he stands to gain if such personnel changes are made. Our party affairs correspondent reports:

[Begin recording] [Tal] Minister Shahal said today that the remarks he made came in response to a question. I made them while thinking about the results of a public opinion poll on the performance of the government and the prime minister, he said. We can see the damage that has been done. Everything else is an attempt to hide our heads in the sand.

[Shahal] The problem is that the polls are indicative of the government's problems. Anyone who expresses his sentiments should stand by what he believes to be the truth. I expressed my views; the others will have to cope with them.

[Tal] The harshest reaction to this came from Minister Ora Namir. She said that behind Shahal's remarks are several unclear intentions:

[Namir] Rumor has it that Shahal wants to be finance minister. I believe support for him in the cabinet is minimal. I believe that making the remarks he did is not a very collegial thing to do, and I wish to remind you that the police portfolio is not a senior post in the Israeli Government—never was, and is not now.

[Tal] Minister Shohat, whose portfolio, according to Namir, Shahal wants to take over, says that if Shahal really wants to trade portfolios, he can always juggle his own.

[Shohat] I believe that such offers only damage the government and the party. If, however, Shahal wants to change places, let him. All I am saying is that if he wants to destroy this government, he should keep making such offers.

[Tal] Minister 'Uzi Bar'am, who plans to speak at the meeting tomorrow in Tel Aviv to rescue Labor, said that Shahal is one of the most talented cabinet members, and that even if Shahal is left with a single portfolio, he will still have a lot to do. It does not matter what Shahal's intentions were when he made the remarks.

[Bar'am] I do not want to address the hidden intentions, and I do not know of any. I know that Moshe Shahal did not say anything that compels anyone to act. He was just talking.

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[Tal] Minister Shim'on Shetrit intends to present a plan for government recovery and image improvement within the coming days. He held a 90-minute meeting on the issue with the prime minister. He said that the public judges this government on the things it has not done, and talk of a ministerial reshuffle could only cause damage:

[Shetrit] The public views this negatively, which is why this offer should not have been made at all.

[Tal] Minister Ben-Eli'ezer also suggested that the ministers keep absolutely quiet. Tomorrow, therefore, Labor will hold its meeting. The quintet is meeting today to prepare for it. Avraham Burg says it will be a reconciliation meeting:

[Burg] A party that makes peace with its worst enemies of the past must begin a dialogue in the party, among its ministers, among the Knesset faction members, with party members, with Israeli citizens, with the residents of the Golan Heights, with the settlers in Judaea and Samaria, and with the Druze. Peace has a moral value that should be expressed in, among other things, our government's ruling style.

[Tal] Tomorrow there will be a meeting of the Labor Party, that will be followed by a Labor Bureau meeting. Many unfinished matters will emerge there. [end recording]

Shahal Favors 'Total Separation,' Green Line Fence

TA0712095994 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 7 Dec 94 p 2

[Report by Raine Marcus]

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] A total separation of Palestinian and Jewish populations may be necessary, Police Minister Moshe Shahal said yesterday.

On a tour of Green Line communities in the Sharon area, Shahal said he would recommend construction of an electronic fence along the Green Line, and would reinforce police there to prevent Arabs from the territories from entering Israel illegally.

Aside from the danger of terrorism, Shahal noted that "the differences between the two populations' economic situations and standards of living will only cause an escalation in property and other crimes as long as they live side by side."

Now that police are responsible for security along the Green Line, additional reinforcements and resources are needed, he said.

Shahal said he hopes to enlist 1,500 soldiers into the police and Border Police forces next year, with an additional 1,500 soldiers expected to serve in the force during 1996-7.

One of their duties will be to check cars arriving here from the territories.

A car is stolen in Israel every 25 minutes, usually ending up in the territories or sold for parts, Shahal said. Police succeed in tracing about half of the vehicles, he said. [passage omitted]

Sarid: Normalization Key to Removing Obstacles

TA0712182694 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1500 GMT 7 Dec 94

[Telephone interview with Environment Minister Yosi Sarid by Razi Barqay and Ya'el Qovetz; place not given—live]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Qovetz] Good evening Minister Yosi Sarid.

[Sarid] Good evening.

[Qovetz] Did you participate in this morning's meeting between Prime Minister Rabin and the American secretary of state?

[Sarid] Indeed I did.

[Qovetz] Are you also optimistic?

[Sarid] I admit to being optimistic by nature and by profession. Without optimism you cannot get a great deal done in our complex and divided region.

[Qovetz] Every time Warren Christopher comes here after meeting Syrian President al-Asad he expresses his conviction about the very good chances for peace between Syria and Israel. Is there anything different about his remarks this time?

[Sarid] No, I think these same statements are simply always right. I really think there is an opportunity to make peace with Syria; however, as we reiterate almost ad nauseum there are still wide gaps between both parties' positions. The whole point of holding negotiations is to narrow these gaps.

[Barqay] When will it be time for Israel to make what you described as painful decisions?

[Sarid] When there is a basis for making these decisions. So far, there is no basis because we still have not received the necessary clarifications from Syria?

[Barqay] What do we still have to hear from the Syrians, Yosi Sarid?

[Sarid] Mainly clarifications on the nature of normalization.

[Barqay] Give me an example.

[Sarid] If we knew that al-Asad intended to achieve real peace with full normalization, diplomatic relations, commercial ties, and open borders, then I assume that once Israel receives satisfactory answers, these issues, although difficult in their own right, would be resolved in turn.

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[Barqay] If the only outstanding problem is normalization, then that means that the issue of withdrawal has already been resolved.

[Sarid] No, I did not say that. I said that the other problems were also serious, but by clearing up the uncertainties on these two issues we would be making significant progress and the other problems would then resolve themselves almost automatically.

[Qovetz] On the other hand, almost no progress seems to be made because the Syrians keep asserting that as far as they are concerned, an Israeli declaration of full withdrawal is a fundamental precondition for any normalization.

[Sarid] I think you just gave an almost perfectly accurate description of the Syrian position which is unacceptable to us. It is precisely this insistance that currently constitutes the greatest obstacle to progress.

[Barqay] I want you to give us some sort of an estimate. You spoke of 1995 as a year of decision, but we remember the same talk about 1993 and 1994.

[Sarid] I do not remember talk about 1993 or 1994. At least, I never made such remarks. At any rate, I still believe that an agreement with Syria is achievable in 1995.

[Barqay] Thank you, Minister Yosi Sarid.

Ties Between Hamas, Israeli Arabs Investigated

TA0712070994 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0500 GMT 7 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] The security forces are investigating suspicions of ties between Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] and Arabs from villages in Yafo and Galilee. It is suspected that Hamas is financing educational and cultural projects in the Galilee and Yafo in order to increase its influence among Israeli Arabs. A security source told our correspondent Dani Zaqen that several Arab citizens have already been interrogated on this issue.

Shaykh 'Abdallah Nimr Darwish, leader of the Islamic Movement in Israel, said he rejects any ties between any illegal element and Israeli Arabs. Shaykh Darwish told our correspondent that Israeli Arabs can and should mediate between the Palestinian Authority and Hamas in order to prevent bloodshed.

Algeria Said Seeking Aid To Fight Extremists

TA0812130194 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 8 Dec 94 p 17

[Report by Paris correspondent Orly Azulay-Katz]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Algerian authorities are interested in Israeli advisory and aid services for establishing a security force to deal with the Muslim fundamentalists who have been waging a war of terrorism against locals and tourists.

An official Algerian Government representative asked a French mediator to create links with Israeli reserve officers who deal with private security services. It has been learned that the French mediator has already turned to several Israeli experts in this issue. A meeting in Paris will apparently take place in Paris next week between the Algerian representative and a representative of one of the Israeli companies. [passage omitted]

Political Status of Histadrut's Ramon Viewed

TA0812073194 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 6 Dec 94 p B2

[Article by Orit Galili]

[FBIS Translated Text] The more concern Labor Party officials express about the erosion in the party's power and its drop in popularity, the happier Histadrut labor federation chairman Hayim Ramon is with his political standing. As far as Ramon is concerned, the current process of soul searching and attempts at reorganization at 110 Hayarqon Street [Labor party headquarters in Tel Aviv] is creating the right psychological foundation for a new political alternative.

One could say that Ramon initiated the present crisis and confusion in the Labor Party. In briefings to political correspondents three weeks ago—just when the media began speculating about the Labor Party's electoral problems—Ramon, in the commentator's chair, painted a gloomy picture of the Israeli left, approximately two and a half years after the elections. Ramon, who like Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin and Likud Chairman Binyamin Netanyahu is an avid consumer of political polls, told the correspondents that the Labor Party has been dropping in the polls for a long time, with Meretz falling even more steeply. According to the polls, the coalition's buffering majority had already disintegrated six months after the elections, losing Knesset seats mainly to the Likud and dropping from 61 to 56 Knesset seats. The government has a problem marketing itself, Ramon said at the time. Now he tries to allay fears by saying that things are not so terrible. This is a well-known phenomenon in mid-term.

The obvious conclusion from the not very complimentary picture Ramon drew of the government was that a niche had formed for a new Knesset list—perhaps headed by him—that would serve as a balance to prevent the Likud from returning to power and influence the composition of the next government. Is it bad for Ramon, a senior Labor figure asked this week, if the next finance and foreign ministers are appointed from his list? Truthfully speaking, Ramon said this week in an amused tone of voice, "for the first time in my career, even I am curious to know what I am about to do. All the options are open, and I only have to choose." Ramon,

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however, is astute enough to know that he will not always enjoy all the options. "Right now I do not know what to choose, and that is the easiest situation," Ramon says. "On the other hand, I will not always have all the options."

Now, 18 months before the parties hold their primaries, Ramon has the best of all worlds. He has the reputation of a reformer in the Histadrut, as opposed to the cabinet ministers, who look like a group of obsequious yes-men around the prime minister. Ramon has maintained his long-standing political alliance with the most prominent of the Labor Knesset members and has regular talks with the prime minister on every second Friday. Many politicians would be happy to be in his shoes.

If the negative feelings toward the Labor Party deepen and the calls to return Ramon to the party increase—both to prevent him from posing an external threat and to prevent other Knesset members [MK's] from resigning in his wake—then he could return as a savior. He could also form his own list and attract disaffected voters. After all, disappointed Labor supporters would find it difficult to vote for Binyamin Netanyahu, so Ramon could serve as a viable alternative.

For the past three years, a group of Labor MK's, dubbed the Octet—which includes Yosi Beilin, Avraham Burg, Ya'el Dayan, and Hagay Merom—has viewed Ramon as its candidate for premiership. They see themselves, of course, as worthy of high-ranking positions at his side, when he attains the supreme appointment. Theirs is a simple equation: They support and believe in him, and he will promote them in due course. None of them is a member of Rabin's government, although they think they are worthy of and suitable for ministerial positions.

Several things happened during these years: Ramon left Labor, followed by two of the Octet members, and he struck an alliance with Meretz for the Histadrut elections, setting up a new list. Rumor has it that in the next Knesset elections he will run on a joint list with Meretz. Nevertheless, the alliance with the five Octet members who remained in Labor was not dissolved. On the contrary, it remained Ramon's political reference group that was and still is of supreme importance for him. Yosi Sarid, Ran Kohen, and Hayim Oron do not share his plans for his future political career, while his Labor allies do: For them, he is the candidate, whether he returns to Labor or decides to run on any other ticket.

However, as long as the issue of candidacy for premiership remains unresolved—and Ramon has announced that he will not compete against Yitzhaq Rabin and that he will do all he can to help get Rabin reelected—the group members do their best to ensure their promotion from the Knesset to the next government. Group members and Ramon mutually take advantage of each other to promote their personal interests. The vociferous opposition of Burg, Merom, Dayan, and Musaliha to Rabin and to the government's performance serves the Histadrut chairman's political purposes. The worse the situation in Labor, the more ministers expose their mediocrity, and the more Rabin loses his electoral prowess, the clearer the political horizons of Ramon and his group become.

Ramon is not the only one who benefits from this. The five MK's are also taking advantage of Ramon, with his consent. He is the gun they are holding to various persons' heads. Unless we are treated nicely, unless we are promoted, we will do exactly what Ramon did. We will leave; we will join him. This is the message conveyed at the meeting organized by Avraham Burg last weekend.

But no one at the Labor Party takes the Quintet's threats seriously. Labor activists explain that although Quintet members have been accusing Rabin of not doing enough to bring Ramon back to the party, his being outside suits them very well. With him in the party, they would have no alternative. By the way, Rabin understands this game perfectly well, and that is why his attitude to this internal opposition is ambivalent. While he realizes that the growing criticism against him inside the party is not doing him any good, he knows that his opponents' power is limited. Rabin knows that any list of Ramon, even one including several Labor breakaways, will not harm him as long as he is not threatened in the premiership race. Ramon's participation in the elections will only serve Rabin's interests, because any votes given to the Ramon list will remain in the blocking majority that he will compose.

Hagay Merom, a leading figure in the Labor opposition to Rabin, says that in the end there is always the personal aspect and that each of us has enough of the way Rabin treats him. "Beilin," he said, "spoke of moving to the permanent arrangement stage [with the Palestinians], and Rabin reacted by saying: 'It is good he does not dictate things around here.' This is a humiliating thing to say about a person who is no negligible figure on the political scene. Speaking about Burg, Rabin told Mendel Kaplan that he would not like to see Burg heading the Jewish Agency, and, as for me, he said he will take steps to prevent my reelection. Musaliha was not appointed as an Arab minister, and Ya'el Dayan is considered a total outcast. We are a popular group, as everyone would agree, but the prime minister pushes us aside. We have exhausted the stage of dialogue with him. It is time for us to move to the next stage."

Hence, they clash with Rabin to improve their position and win ministerial status in the next government. This can be done only if the public is made to feel that the time has come to set up a younger leadership. Ramon is a full, though secret, partner in all these moves. While the other members stand up against the prime minister, Ramon chooses to reiterate that he would not run against the prime minister and will do everything he can to help Rabin get reelected. We are cooperating, Ramon told

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HA'ARETZ, explaining the recent moves by the quintet, but some things are done individually. "For example," Ramon said, "I believe that Merom was wrong on the Sheves issue. It was wrong for him to lash out at the Prime Minister's Office director general. Sheves does not cause Rabin any damage, rather he helps Rabin very much. He is the first director general to hold himself responsible for monitoring the work of the ministries, and he presents his impressions, criticism, and evaluation of their performance."

When Ramon set up his New Life list, he called on the Prime Minister's Office director general to join him and choose any post he likes. "I told him that I would be very pleased if he chooses to join me, but I know that Sheves will remain on Rabin's side for as long as Rabin is active on the political scene. Sheves is connected—mind, heart, and stomach—to the prime minister."

Will Rabin have to let Sheves go if he wants to get reelected? Ramon does not believe this is true. At the same time, Ramon believes that personnel changes in the government, as Sheves has allegedly suggested, could help Rabin. "Yet, knowing Rabin, he does not work like that. To my regret, additional things that should have been done were not done because the prime minister's character does not let him cause the necessary shock." The shock I caused in Israeli politics matches my character. "There is no room for idle talk on such matters—you either do things or file them away."

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Prime Minister Views Budget, Post-Peace Era

JN0712153794 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1222 GMT 7 Dec 94

[Statement by Prime Minister Dr. 'Abd-al-Salam al-Majali at the House of Representatives in Amman on 7 December—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate, and prayers and peace be on the greatest of the messengers, Muhammad Bin-'Abdallah: Speaker of the House, Esteemed Deputies: Please accept my warmest greetings.

I pray to God Almighty that he bless us all with his guidance and mercy and lead us all to the right way. We are going through unusual circumstances and are at a critical crossroads with far-reaching implications for our and future generations. Needless to say, under such circumstances, we are bound to experience a keener sense of things and our minds are bound to be more concentrated and our thoughts more excited. Such circumstances as these require that we show patience and take a close, thoughtful, and studied look at things if we are to make the right decisions, which we can ill afford not to do.

I find it fit to make a speech ahead of the the finance minister's detailed budget speech. I will address policy and the political dimensions of the Jordanian economy, as well as the budget figures and estimates. This year's may be one of the most ambitious budgets, taking into account, as it does, the present public expectations and aspirations and apprehensions. It is an opportunity for the government to present to the country's deputies its visions so that the field may be open for a thorough debate by your esteemed house.

Mr. Speaker, respected deputies: The peace that we concluded and that has gone through the constitutional channels amounts to a promise of a brighter future. But we are not pursuing this bright future as a price for the signature that we put to the peace agreement with Israel. It is a just reward for a dynamic and strong-willed country, whose children are trying to make the most of available opportunities relying on hard work and a sense of certitude. In this country, we have, over the years, faced and survived major challenges for which our enlightened leadership has proven more than a match. Had this country been prompted by considerations of material gain, it would have held back from many actions. However, our country has pursued policies of honor, manliness, and will power without ever compromising its principles.

The peace we signed was not the peace of those who seek bribes, favors, or a bag of money flung our way. We proceeded toward peace in light of a thorough and responsible study, a meticulous scrutiny of our circumstances and fate, and after realistically assessing our state of affairs. We negotiated with dignity to regain all our rights which we decided to regain. We now initiate a new pattern of assiduous work through which we will regain all these rights and address our commitments. To do this, we must be prepared on the domestic front and tackle our painful problems with daring solutions that the executive branch alone cannot implement without continued cooperation with you.

We entered peace as a country that is the master of its own destiny and decision. We must translate the peace requirements as a country which has integrated institutions. From this premise, this government believes that the role it is required to assume to build Jordan, solve its economic and social problems, and upgrade its performance and production levels can only be carried out in congruence with your role. The attainment of these hopes will always remain a concerted and continuous endeavor by the entire society, unaffected by boredom or fatigue, that will resolutely proceed until it achieves its noble objectives.

Mr. Speaker, respected house members, peace is not just a treaty with Israel. It is a complete change of our regional and international role. We face options: Either we leave others to plan for this role and find ourselves in a situation of one who is forced to coexist with this plan, and this is something our Hashemite leadership does not accept nor do we accept for ourselves, or to participate ourselves in mapping out this future and thus influence its nature and components. If we do so, we will enjoy a stronger negotiating position that makes us more immune and more capable of safeguarding our rights and interests.

We fully realize that our role becomes immune and strong if we and our Arab brothers reach agreement on coordination and cooperation formulas that render us more capable of tackling changes and making them serve our common Arab interests. But, the wind does not always blow in the right direction, and the world will not wait long for us as it has a well-established strategy in this region which it will not give up. In view of this state of affairs, we seek to turn Jordan's position and its political and geographic location, and its resources and those of its people into an asset that will enable us to get the maximum possible for Jordan and the Arabs. To attain this role and exploit available resources, we need support.

The question is: Shall we tell the world that we have entered peace and that we want the price in cash? The answer we will hear is that such times have gone for good. The days of the oil boom and Arab cash surplus, when our Arab brothers used to extend direct aid to us, have gone for good. Such aid will never resume even if relations between us return to their previous warmth. Our brothers's vision and methods have changed, and they no longer have abundant money. Instead, they want to be partners in return for what they give. We, in Jordan, are ready and we also want to strengthen these relations on clear-cut bases to achieve the interests of all parties. The government will do its utmost to achieve that.

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States which have a cash surplus and are able to extend economic and financial aid, want to know how that money will be spent. They refuse to give money for the sake of giving unless it is linked with a clear-cut, convincing economic effort. They also insist that each country in the world shoulders its responsibilities regarding its spending and revenues. They, however, are ready to extend mixed financing for development and production projects in the form of aid and loans, the degree of softness depending on the project itself, especially if the project is regional and has obvious effects on supporting peace, security, and stability.

The peace treaty has raised the following big question: Was our signing of it a prelude to obtaining grants and aid? Nobody, who has insight, and appreciates responsibility, said that he was ready to link the signing of the treaty with financial aid. Far be it from us to say that. However, Jordan knows that its signing of the peace treaty has given our region, as well as the world, a better chance for construction and prosperity. We have a clear-cut and considerable right to that. Securing these rights requires us to work hard to prepare projects and draw up plans and arrangements to attract support and aid. The way to that is clear. We have to know our priorities, to find a way to achieve the greatest possible advantage for this country, and to create correct and sound channels to spend money as efficiently as possible so that we can invest the peace opportunity to build Jordan and contain the problems of unemployment and poverty.

We do not want money to be spent on consumption. Rather, we want money to become a wealth that will enable us to increase investment; expand the infrastructure such as building roads, ports, and schools; qualify manpower; improve our administrative performance; support both sides of democracy, rights and duties; and build the productive citizen that is proud of his achievements and his role in the society.

Money is the principal factor for any investment process. It is also the oil that turns the economic wheel. But the most important capital is the state's reputation in both the regional and international arenas.

The international status Jordan enjoys at present, thanks to the great leadership of King Husayn and the relentless efforts of his highness the crown prince, have given Jordan an international reputation and position among world states to which many richer countries are unable to aspire. This reputation, which is spreading in the world, is the atmosphere that will support the economic and political development, and will back the public and private sectors in our country.

Hence, it is clear that asking the private sector to intensify its efforts to benefit from this reputation will have great effect in increasing the income of the individual and homeland.

Mr. Speaker, respected deputies: Based on studying the reality in which we live and the international and regional changes around us, we worked for making the draft budget a mirror that reflects the reality and the aspirations. Therefore, the draft budget was based on clear principles in the expectations and in the way it was prepared.

The Armed Forces and the Public Security are the protecting fence and shield. It is important to keep them ready with the best equipment. The nations that build their future on the basis of stability and security work for this objective through a vigilant eye, strong arm, and effective defensive weapon. Therefore, we were eager to provide the armed and security forces—of which King Husayn and the sons of the homeland are proud—sufficient financing to perform their role to the best.

Based on our commitment to make the draft budget an embodiment of the widest possible participation, we asked for it to be worked out at an early stage. All directors of ministries' departments and government departments in the governorates were asked to prepare their budgets in a manner that reflects the priorities in accordance with their importance. After these budgets were worked out, the executive councils in the governorates convened and discussed the budgets presented by the directors. Some deputies took part in this effort, and contributed with their views and ideas. After the draft budgets of departments in the governorates were worked out, the figures in these draft budgets were compiled and classified. Then the Budget Department worked with the ministries to reconsider their priorities. The listed expenditures were found to be above the expected revenues. The Ministerial Budgetary Committee then worked for making a balance between what needs to be expended and the available money and revenues. The current expenditures were reasonably increased, and the surplus was then distributed on capital investments. It was clear that the committed projects are more than the surplus from the current expenditures, and this resulted in a budget deficit.

We have developed the system of participation in working out the budget this year from the way it was when this experiment began last year. However, we believe that this system can be developed and energized. Likewise, the government emphasizes that the principle of continuity in the budget is the best guarantee for the priorities that were not implemented this year to be implemented next year or the following year. Hence, the budget changed from a mere listing of projects and programs in one year into a flexible plan that may cover two years or more. As for the projects that are linked to peace, a discussion took place at the Council of Ministers on how to include them in the budget. The financing for these projects will be made available, and we seek this with all our capabilities. Furthermore, I emphasize that this subject is a priority in the contacts of his majesty the supreme leader and His Highness Prince Hasan. From a technical point of view, including these projects in the budget without completing the financial arrangements means aggravating the deficit.

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After deep consideration and in light of the facts, we preferred to add the peace projects and their estimated expenses to Chapter II of the budget.

We are very confident that these projects will be accomplished through follow-up and determination by virtue of the supreme commander who persistently makes continuous efforts to build Jordan and maintain its growth and development.

Mr. Speaker, respected deputies: You know that Jordan has begun to implement the policy of sectorial restructuring and economic reformation since 1989. Within this framework, we are implementing an ambitious program. These policies have resulted in rectifying many defects in our economic structure, as is reflected by the basic economic indicators. After years of suffering from inflation, the increase in prices has declined to percentages that are less than those of the real growth in production.

The balance of payments, the foreign currency reserves, and the dinar's exchange rate came under growing pressures during the first half of 1994. However, they returned to their healthy level in the second half. The basic issue which is still the focus of our attention is unemployment and poverty. I believe that these two topics are linked to each other, so that finding solutions to the problem of unemployment will necessarily mean a clear alleviation of the burden of poverty for both the families and those who support them.

We can better view the issue of unemployment in Jordan in a comprehensive, objective manner, so we can find the most appropriate solution to it by creating real job opportunities which will enhance production, and not by merely adding more jobs to the government cadres. The Government can—if it so wishes—decide to increase the number of employees. Such a decision, however, implies a high cost for services production, bureaucratic fatigue, increasing current expenditure at the expense of investment, and cutting other expenditure.

On the other hand, we can see that the number of non-Jordanian workers is estimated at more than 200,000, and there is not enough readiness [by Jordanians] to work in jobs occupied by non- Jordanian workers due to the quality of these jobs, the prevailing social values, and sometimes the low income of these jobs.

We have learned from our own experience and that of others that the most successful way to resolve the problem of unemployment and poverty is useful productive investment. The absence of peace has deprived our country of many internal and external investment opportunities. The atmosphere of peace has begun to bear fruit, and since peace began we have seen a great readiness to establish industries and investment projects as well as readiness by the Arab and foreign investors to invest in Jordan. The capitals registered so far have been estimated at hundreds of millions of dinars. In the future, we will see a growing tendency in this direction, and this is the basic solution to contain unemployment and confront poverty.

In order to consolidate this praiseworthy and rational approach in our economy, the Government is determined to reconsider the relevant legislation. We have worked hard on this legislation, and we hope for your support and backing. We will do our utmost to cooperate with the private sector, so it will be provided with the most ideal circumstances to unleash its energies and abilities in order to build our homeland and promote its developmental march.

We believe that economic and social issues interact and that the solutions required for them also interact. The government strongly believes that partial solutions on the overall economic level are no use at all. We have to adopt the method of a major and balanced push in dealing with issues in cooperation and coordination with your esteemed House so that our country can have a real chance of building, investing, achieving steady development, and providing a decent and good life for every citizen.

In light of developments in the region, time has become a precious asset. Completing the steps that previous governments had begun in cooperation with your esteemed House requires further new, intensive, and wide steps this year. We are serious about doing this, hoping that we will receive every positive response from you.

Mr. Speaker, honorable deputies: The other major issue that still preoccupies the mind is the administrative reform, including the distribution of powers and responsibilities and enabling local government departments in governorates, cities, and villages to play an effective role, to promote participation in decisionmaking, and to expand the spheres of democracy to cover all walks of life so that every part of our dear homeland can fully take part in the sacrifice and have a fair share of the benefits and gains.

We believe that each deputy has two major roles to play. He plays a role in his capacity as the whole nation's representative, who bears in his heart and mind its hopes and griefs. He plays another role in his capacity as a deputy in parliament, who represents a specific region and who is dutybound to care for its interests and provide the services, projects, financing, job opportunities, and other legitimate requirements it deserves.

We know that these two roles do not always go hand in hand. While the honorable deputy exerts efforts to provide all that his region needs, he may sometimes clash with the lack of sufficient money to meet these needs in light of the requirements of the other electoral constituencies in the kingdom. There is no doubt that dialogue and discussions on the general state budget show that each one of us finds himself torn between the requirements of his region and the general national potential.

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This year's budget may have special circumstances, which make people's expectations higher and more hopeful. Some of you may raise the issue of peace revenues, and will honestly convey to us the aspirations of the sons of their regions for a better life. We agree with them on the need to invest peace in order to raise the living and human standard of each citizen. This will not occur, as I have said, by obtaining and distributing money to people but by planning and dealing with the Arab region and the world in a new way to be able to attract investments and money for projects and the infrastructure. I will not repeat what I have said, and I am fully confident that you will back the government's position that is in line with our being and our national honor.

Proceeding from this, the government is determined to continue the policy of giving central powers to local governments and supporting their ability to plan, build, follow up, obtain financing, and build their own potential to carry out their duties. Due to their closeness to the citizen and their direct and daily contact with him, the local governments will be more able to meet his needs and care for his circumstances. Therefore, central organs can make arrangements and draw up clear plans for them to reflect the aspirations of the citizens and their representatives, to reconcile between the variant needs and requirements among the various regions of the kingdom, and to facilitate the process of mixing and reconciling between local and national requirements.

Mr. Speaker, respected deputies: Under circumstances of fast unfolding developments, the 1995 state budget was an extremely critical and difficult thing to work out. My speech reflects a desire on my part that the government and house share an evaluation of these circumstances. The government has invested considerable efforts in preparing this budget, especially insofar as the living conditions of the average Jordanian are concerned. The budget must clearly fit into a grand national plan that fulfills King Husayn's dream of a self-reliant and confident society based on systematic and sound planning. We are not interested in a consumer budget that feeds on the future. Nor do we want one that overlooks our dynamic individual's need to satisfy his family's requirements.

This budget seeks to realize all that is humanly possible and it paves the way for further construction and investment. The budget alone, however, cannot further that aim unless it is supported by proper legislation and sound measures and considered steps.

Considering the budget from a certain angle, we may find that it falls short of our ambitions. However, taking a more comprehensive look, we will find that it largely meets our aspirations. All of us are striving for the best. The budget gives you access to both the assets and the mechanisms to manage them.

Mr. Speaker, Respected Deputies: We share the responsibility for making the future, its bricks being faith, work, empathy, solidarity, and closed ranks so that we may build an affluent and democratic society where justice rules supreme. I can see on the horizon a bright and promising future where the poor will receive the benefit of our helping hand until his distress ends and the jobless will find a place where he can work and the weak will find a place where he can lead a dignified and decent life.

God willing, Jordan will remain the centerpiece of the great Arab homeland that will relate to brother Arabs. God willing, Jordan's banner will remain aloft and its borders secure and impregnable and its valiant soldiers watchful over its borders and soil. We will remain with King Husayn until we build dams and canals and until water flows so that we make the desert bloom with fruit and abundance and build schools and institutes that turn out ingenious and industrious graduates. As for industrialization, we are determined to promote that sector in order for it to become competitive qualitatively and quantitatively worldwide, as well as regionally. Jordan will become a magnet for capital investment that ordinarily is drawn to peaceful and stable environments. In this country, we dream big dreams that we will fulfill, and toward that end we will work diligently and patiently. We will not be discouraged by any impediments and we will work as faithful and energetic men. Thank you, and may God guide your and our steps to the good of this country so that it may be an asset for the Arab nation and capable of fulfilling itself and its ambitions under the leadership of His Majesty King Husayn. God's peace and mercy upon you.

Israel's Netanyahu Meets King, Crown Prince

TA0612200194 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew 1800 GMT 6 Dec 94

[Correspondent Menashe Raz video report]

[FBIS Translated Text] Likud Chairman Binyamin Netanyahu met today in Amman with King Husayn, Crown Prince Hasan, and the Jordanian prime minister. The meetings dealt with political and economic issues and the men also discussed cooperation in the war against terrorism. Netanyahu was accompanied by our correspondent Menashe Raz:

[Begin recording] [Raz] King Husayn briefly participated in the meeting between Knesset Member [MK] Binyamin Netanyahu and Crown Prince Hasan. The king was busy escorting the queen of the Netherlands, who is also visiting Jordan. At the meeting, the men discussed many issues, including the points of disagreement between the Jordanian rulers and the chairman of the Israeli opposition, which mainly pertained to the Palestinian problem.

[Husayn, in English] Our message to the Palestinians has always been our hope that they will stick to their land, that they will evolve from where we are to what they should be. That there will be a change in the quality of

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life there. In any event, we will support them in any way that we can on a case by case basis.

[Hasan, in English] The reasons for extremism are dispossession, despair, poverty, unemployment. I think that the turn to religion is naturally understood in these circumstances or in many circumstances. But I would like to make it very clear that there is in our mind a clear distinction between Islam, between fundamentalism, which is not characteristic only of Islam but of other religions as well, and between extremism. And I think that when extremism resorts to violence then we stand against it quite clearly and obviously.

[Raz] MK Netanyahu stressed that in his view, the Israeli Government should do all it can to influence the U.S. Adminstration to continue economic aid to Jordan, which has an important role in helping to establish peace between the two countries.

[Netanyahu] This was not just a meeting between Jordan's rulers and the leaders of the Israeli Government. The fact that they publicly, overtly, officially, and openly invited the head of the Israeli opposition constitutes the clearest expression of the nature, sincerity, and stability of the peace between Jordan and Israel.

[Raz] Although the Jordanian authorities did not permit full media coverage of the visit, Netanyahu was given a warm reception and two Jordanian Air Force helicopters flew the Likud chairman from Amman to the village of al-Karamah. Netanyahu told his hosts that he had fought there as a soldier in 1968 in the famous military operation that ended in failure. At the conclusion of his visit, Netanyahu laid a wreath on a monument for Jordanian soldiers who fell in the battle of al-Karamah. Crown Prince Hasan proposed establishing a joint monument at the site for IDF [Israel Defense Forces] and Jordanian Army soldiers who died in the operation. Hasan also promised to investigate the fate of two Israeli soldiers who have been missing in action since the battle. Netanyahu will raise the idea of the joint monument before Yitzhaq Rabin, the prime minister and defense minister, when he briefs the prime minister on his visit. [end recording]

Jordanian-Israeli Committee Holds Meeting

Implementation of Treaty Discussed

JN0712212394 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 7 Dec 94

[Report by correspondent Nimr Mijhim al-'Adwan—italicized passages in English]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The meeting of the joint Jordanian-Israeli committee [held today] was aimed at following up the implementation of the peace treaty and supervising the work of the subcommittees entrusted with negotiating the issues and agreements stipulated in the peace treaty.

The Jordanian side in these meetings was led by Dr. Hani al-Mulqi, secretary general of the Higher Council for Sciences and Technology, while the Israeli side was led by Dr. Elyaqim Rubenstein, head of the Israeli side to negotiations. [passage omitted]

Regarding the border demarcation committee, Dr. al-Mulqi asserted that its work is expected to end in the next two months.

[Begin al-Mulqi recording] As is stipulated in the agreement, the issue [border demarcation] will end at the beginning of February, God willing. [end recording]

For his part, Dr. Rubenstein lauded the prevailing positive atmosphere of negotiations and the spirit of accord characterizing the positions of both sides.

[Begin recording] [Rubenstein] *I believe there shouldn't be any real problems because both sides are positive. It is positivity, a spirit of good will on both sides. It was definitely reflected in the meeting.*

[Al-'Adwan] *Sir, next Sunday is scheduled for opening up embassies in both countries. What would you like to say about this?*

[Rubenstein] *I recall his majesty's words about the happiness of reaching this stage that God gave us life to reach this day; and I can reciprocate with respect on our side how this is being enthusiastically welcome in Israel. It is... [pauses] if you can judge by the interest of the public, of the media on this subject—who will be the ambassador, where will be the embassy, and so forth—that these things are very moving. And I can only say that for those of us who worked in this field it is a very gratifying moment.*

[Al-'Adwan] *Sir, when do you expect the final nomination of your ambassador to Jordan?*

[Rubenstein] *Hopefully soon, as soon as possible. There are many good candidates, a number of good candidates. And I hope that the choice will be a good one as your choice, if I may say, has been a very good one.*

[Al-'Adwan] *Thank you, sir.*

[Rubenstein] *Thank you.* [end recording]

Al-Mulqi Comments on Talks

JN0712182794 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 7 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] The Joint Jordanian-Israeli Committee held a meeting in Dayr 'Alla today to follow up the implementation of the contents of the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty. The Jordanian side was headed by Dr. Hani al-Mulqi, secretary general of the Sciences and Technology Council, while the Israeli side was headed by Dr. Elyaqim Rubenstein. Details from our correspondent Marzuq al-'Uwaymir:

[Begin recording] [Al-'Uwaymir] The Joint Jordanian-Israeli Committee held a meeting to follow up the

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implementation of the provisions of the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty, and to discuss the duties and dates of the meetings of the various committees, which are working to reach joint agreements and to implement the contents of the peace treaty signed by the two governments of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the State of Israel. At the beginning of the meeting, Dr. Hani al-Mulqi, head of the Jordanian side, delivered a speech in which he expressed hope that the committee's work would run smoothly, stressing that the aim was to reach an agreement on all the different issues tackled by the specialized committees. Dr. al-Mulqi said: We will help the committees complete the necessary preparations regarding all the agreements contained in the peace treaty.

Dr. Elyaqim Rubenstein, head of the Israeli side, also delivered a speech in which he thanked the Jordanian Government for its warm reception and voiced his happiness and that of his accompanying delegation over visiting Jordan. He said: We are looking forward to activating the committee's work, particularly since there is one goal. He also stressed the importance of doing things on time. Dr. Rubenstein added that both countries' welcome of the peace treaty proves the importance of the peace opportunity and the new vision of peace, which has become part of our daily life. He added: We do not want peace to be merely between governments but to be among people. We want to create peace in all walks of life. Following the meeting, Dr. Hani al-Mulqi spoke to journalists, and said:

[Al-Mulqi] Today we agreed to hold several preparatory meetings of the various committees next week to draw up a general outline of their activities. The issue then will be presented to officials to make a suitable decision. The various committees will begin meetings as of next Sunday. There will be meetings on Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday. As I have said, the transportation committee held a meeting last week and the week before the last. Committees on the environment, agriculture, water, and drug and crime combating will join next week's meetings, God willing. The transportation committee will meet at the Dead Sea area on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday; the water committee will meet in Tiberias on Sunday; and the agriculture committee will meet at the Shaykh Husayn bridge area. [end recording]

Subcommittees' Work Detailed

JN0812110494 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 8 Dec 94 p 1

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Amman (J.T.)—The Jordanian-Israeli committee charged with the implementation of Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty concluded a meeting at Dayr 'Alla in the Jordan Valley Wednesday [7 December].

Dr. Hani al-Mulqi, the head of the Jordanian side, told PETRA news agency that the two sides discussed the general framework for the work of the sub-committees, and will submit that to the two governments for approval before holding the next meeting on Dec. 18 at Lake Tiberias on the Israeli side.

Dr. al-Mulqi said that starting on Sunday five of these subcommittees would start discussions on transport, environment, agriculture, water, crime and drugs. The talks will be held at different locations on Tiberias, the Dead Sea and Shaykh Husayn Bridge, Dr. al-Mulqi said. He said that discussions on economic cooperation were postponed until the joint committee's next meeting on Dec. 18.

According to Dr. al-Mulqi the process of demarcation of borders between the two countries was proceeding according to plan. He said that all land mines on both sides will be removed by February stressing that all committee meetings would conclude in nine months.

Meanwhile the Jordanian-Palestinian committee on displaced persons held a meeting at the Foreign Ministry in Amman and focused its attention on matters related to information about the number of displaced persons and need for reasserting their rights and ensuring their repatriation.

'Asim Ghushah, member of the Jordanian committee, said that the meeting paved the way for a four-nation committee meeting grouping Jordan, Egypt, Palestine and Israel that has been entrusted to discuss the question of refugees and displaced persons.

He said that the two sides agreed that Jordan, Palestine and Egypt hold a separate meeting in advance of the four-nation meeting.

Meanwhile, Walid Zaqut, a member of the Palestinian delegation, said that he would demand that 254,000 displaced persons should have their permits allowing them to return to Palestine be renewed.

He said these displaced persons, 200,000 in Egypt and 54,000 in Jordan, have had their permits canceled by the Israeli authorities.

Contacts With Syria To Ease 'Tension'

JN0812123394 Amman AKHBAR AL-USBU' in Arabic 8 Dec 94 p 1

["Exclusive" report]

[FBIS Translated Text] Amman—The Jordanian Government has embarked on contacts with the Syrian Government through diplomatic channels to arrange for a high-ranking political meeting to remove the tension that appeared in bilateral relations following the signing of the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty.

Foreign Ministry sources said the government is holding contacts with the Syrian Government to remove the tension in relations, particularly since the peace treaty that caused the tension has become a reality. The sources

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added that the Jordanian move came following Christopher's failure to convince Syria to agree on the Israeli proposals regarding a conditional partial Israeli withdrawal from the Golan Heights.

King Accepts 'Ubaydat's Senate Resignation

JN0812112494 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1100 GMT 8 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] A Royal Decree has been issued appointing Dr. Qasim Muhammad 'Ajaj 'Ubaydat as member of the Senate as of today.

A Royal Decree was also issued accepting the resignation of Ahmad 'Ubaydat from the Senate as of today. [Former Prime Minister Ahmad 'Ubaydat announced his opposition to the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty during the Senate's debate on the treaty]

Weekly Reports New Government To Be Formed

JN0812124194 Amman AKHBAR AL-USBU' in Arabic 8 Dec 94 p 1

[FBIS Translated Text] AKHBAR AL-USBU' has learned that a new Jordanian Government will be formed in the next few days and that it will be headed by Dr. 'Abd-al-Salam al-Majali; His Excellency al-Sharif Zayd Bin-Shakir, chief of the Royal Court; or Marwan al-Qasim, his majesty the king's political adviser. It has also been learned that the new government will include only a few members of the present government, in addition to a number of moderate politicians.

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Khaddam Calls For Full Israeli Pullout From Golan

NC0712195894 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1805 GMT 7 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 7 Dec (MENA)—Syrian Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam has stated that normalization with Israel is contingent on full withdrawal from the Golan, adding that if it does not happen there will be no peace or stability in the Middle East.

In an interview to be published in the 9 December issue of the Egyptian magazine AL-MUSAWWAR, Khaddam said Syria is not interested in the peace that Israel wants, which is based on inequalities and on the imposition of its policies and interests not only on Syria but the whole region.

Khaddam affirmed that Syria wants a just and fair peace that it can protect and defend. Peace that is based on inequalities or that serves the interest of one party cannot survive.

In his interview, Khaddam disclosed that Syria possesses a U.S. letter clearly stating that the United States does not approve the annexation of one inch of the Golan to Israel.

In answer to a question, Khaddam said that Israel must withdraw to the 4 June 1967 border without Syria relinquishing one inch of its land because everyone must know that the aggressor, regardless of the passage of time, cannot seize any territory or achieve any gain.

On the security arrangements, Khaddam said Syria is agreeable to security arrangements provided they are fair and balanced on both sides of the border. This means that any measures taken on Syrian territory must be reciprocated on the other side.

On the deployment of U.S. forces in the Golan, Khaddam explained that this subject has not been discussed yet and that it is premature to deal with it now. He said we will deal with these matters when we discuss the security arrangements.

On the settlements in the Golan, Khaddam said not a single settler will be accepted on Syrian territory. No traces of the Israeli occupation or its vestiges in the Arab territories occupied in 1967 will be accepted.

On Syria's adherence to a comprehensive solution, Khaddam said that Syria will not conclude an agreement with Israel unless it is coupled with an agreement between Lebanon and Israel.

On nuclear disarmament, Khaddam explained that Egypt and Syria are in agreement on this subject and that there is coordination between the two governments. Undoubtedly, Israel's stance obstructs the establishment of a nuclear-free zone in the Middle East.

On Egypt's attempt to join the Arab Maghreb Union, Khaddam said he does not believe Egypt's aim is to detach itself from the Arab East and its problems because it lies in the heart of the Arab world. It cannot abandon this role and I don't believe it wants to do so, he said. He added that President Husni Mubarak realizes well Egypt's Arab role. We believe that the Arab Maghreb must be interested in the issues of the Arab east and vice versa, he said.

Media View Israeli Efforts in Peace Process

'Arrogant' to Community Wishes

JN0612082494 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0545 GMT 6 Dec 94

[Press review]

[FBIS Translated Text] In a commentary today, the newspaper AL-BA'TH reiterates that there can be no peace without Syria, and that there can be no regional security as long as even a single inch of the Golan, southern Lebanon, or other Arab territory, remains under Israeli occupation.

The paper adds: When it demands the restoration of rights vindicated by international resolutions, Syria is neither obstructing efforts nor disobeying the will of the international community, as Israel has been doing over the past 45 years. The current Israeli conduct on the eve of fresh diplomatic moves demonstrates that Israel is opposed to peace, because it is opposed to withdrawal from the Arab territories it is occupying. After all, Israel has not withdrawn from Gaza, the West Bank, and the Jordan Valley despite the peace it has obtained.

The paper goes on to say: If the peace process is to be promoted, and if Israel is to demonstrate credibility, one must examine Israeli intentions and learn of the plans Israel is preparing to carry out by the use of force, particularly since it has obtained all kinds of arms. This has rendered it extremely arrogant, intransigent, and indisposed to obey the international community's wishes.

For its part, the newspaper TISHRIN comments on Israeli efforts to obstruct the regional peace process through procrastination, prevarication, and misrepresentation of facts to evade the requirements of just, comprehensive, and honorable peace, saying: Israel's credibility vis-a-vis the efforts to achieve firm peace has suffered a setback. By contrast, Syria's credibility has been boosted, particularly since the world community has become convinced of the soundness of its positions, which champion a just and durable peace that dismantles occupation; ends all forms of injustice, repression, and oppression; and brings about a new era of development and prosperity in the Middle East.

The paper notes that peace and occupation cannot exist under the same roof. The paper maintains that peace will remain ink on paper unless Israel implements the relevant international resolutions, which clearly provide for

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complete withdrawal, rather than partial withdrawals from all occupied Arab territories.

The paper goes on to say that Syria and Lebanon cannot accept anything short of hard facts, chief among which are complete Israeli withdrawal from the Golan and southern Lebanon and the dismantling of the settlements.

TISHRIN says that there can be no regional peace without Syria and Lebanon.

TISHRIN concludes by saying that rescuing the U.S. peace initiative and rendering Christopher's efforts a success are, first and foremost, contingent upon the vindication of international law, curbing Israeli intransigence, and declaring that peace is attainable only if occupation is completely and irreversibly dismantled.

In a commentary today, the newspaper AL-THAWRAH says that there can be no regional stability and security unless a just and comprehensive peace is achieved. Such peace must ensure complete Israeli withdrawal from the Golan, southern Lebanon, and all occupied Arab territories. Such peace must also guarantee the rights and interests of all, the paper maintains.

AL-THAWRAH adds: The stalemate plaguing the peace process has begun to jeopardize the current opportunity to achieve just and comprehensive peace in the region, which observers have described as historic and unique. The Israeli rejection of the premise of full peace in exchange for full withdrawal is the major obstacle impeding the peace process. At a time when the region will be receiving U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher, who is making a new tour of the region as part of the persistent U.S. efforts to promote the peace process, Syria would like to reiterate anew that in order to rescue the peace process and end the stalemate plaguing it Israel must subscribe to complete withdrawal as a prerequisite for full peace. Israel also needs to commit itself to a comprehensive solution, because peace cannot be promoted by separate and unilateral deals. Israel cannot skip over these two facts.

'Proposals' Entrench Occupation of Golan

JN0712094994 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0545 GMT 7 Dec 94

[Press review]

[FBIS Translated Text] In an editorial entitled "Peace Not Only on Paper," AL-BA'TH says: Peace cannot be achieved by words alone. Equally, it cannot be achieved on paper alone unless it is connected to the implementation on the ground. There is a great difference between peace on paper and peace that is translated into reality.

AL-BA'TH adds: Israel is trying to escape, distort, or erase this fact, which is based on reality, logic, and history by employing various means and methods that aim to achieve the same goal; that is, to subjugate the region and control its resources.

AL-BA'TH stresses: If the Rabin government has achieved success in this regard through the Oslo Agreement and the treaty with Jordan, it did not, and will not succeed with Syria, whether it tries to tempt it or exercise pressures against it. This is because Syria had accepted the peace initiative, and its principles and commitments, as an indivisible whole.

AL-BA'TH says: The escalating campaign launched by the Rabin government against the Syria position falls within the framework of the attempt to influence the firmness of that position and the attempt to escape the dues of peace, for whose sake intensive world efforts are being exerted in order to spare the region the perils of a conflict, the consequences of which are unpredictable.

AL-BA'TH concludes by saying: It has now become a practice to see each new tour by the U.S. secretary of state to the region accompanied by an Israeli escalation and an intransigent position, through which Israel tries to find new labyrinths to deviate the peace process from its course. During Christopher's current tour, the Rabin government raised the argument of taking advantage of the presence of the Labor Party in power. However, President al-Asad has asserted and continues to assert that Syria is not interested in which party is in power in Israel—Labor or Likud. Syria is interested in the achievement of the just and comprehensive peace. Otherwise, the situation can continue as it is because capitulation is not in Syria's dictionary.

In a commentary entitled "The Cause for the Gap," AL-THAWRAH notes that the Israeli search for partial settlements instituted a road to escape the dues of peace, particularly withdrawal, and also provided a green light that Israel thinks it can use to infiltrate into, and dominate the Arab arena through normalizing ties, ending the boycott, and establishing economic, cultural, and political cooperation. Without uttering the word "complete withdrawal" and more, Israel has acted, and is acting as if the Arab territory it is occupying is its own, thus violating the facts of history and geography and the UN Security Council resolutions.

AL-THAWRAH stresses that Syria has never thought, and will never think, that the peace process will turn into episodes of Israeli procrastination over the implementation of the resolutions of legitimacy and Israeli evasion of the requirements of peace, particularly the complete withdrawal. Leader al-Asad also stressed that capitulation is not Syria's habit, ideology, or firm national and pan-Arab course and that it adheres to the rights and defends the nation's critical causes.

AL-THAWRAH concludes by saying: Syria is reaffirming its assertion that it supports any effort to achieve real progress in the peace process on its set course to achieve a just and comprehensive peace. Progress will

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continue to hinge on Israel's seriousness because it was and still is the cause for the gap.

On the same subject, TISHRIN says: Israeli officials do not stop making accusations left, right, and center and calling on Syria to be in harmony with the world and grab the opportunity before it is too late so that it does not pay a heavy price.

TISHRIN stresses that the unquestionable fact is that the Israeli officials are trying to promote a climate of pessimism for one simple reason—they do not want peace. They also continue to place obstacles on the path of the U.S. secretary of state's efforts and make impossible proposals and conditions which they know in advance cannot be accepted by Syria.

TISHRIN refers to a proposal by Israeli officials that they want Syria to accept. Such proposals entrench their occupation of parts of the Golan Heights, their hegemony over the region's resources, and their intervention in the region's affairs.

TISHRIN concludes by saying: Syria adheres to the just and comprehensive peace that will completely end occupation and return Arab rights to their owners. There can be no peace in the Middle East without the return of rights and land. It is impossible for the Arabs to establish any kind of peace with Israel unless their occupied territory is returned and unless Israel ends the hegemony it imposes on the Palestinian people. Israel is only deceiving itself with its partial agreements, which are so remote from the just peace. Such feeble agreements cannot hold ground in the face of events. Israel's talk about the price which Syria may have to pay if it does not accept what it is being offered is a denounced and rejected means of extortion.

'Ideas' Needed To Move Talks

JN0712145794 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1230 GMT 7 Dec 94

[Station commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] Gentlemen: The whole world is now aware that Syria has always been with any sincere effort to advance the peace process. This was emphasized by Secretary Christopher following his talks with President Hafiz al-Asad when he said he felt that President al-Asad was serious in seeking peace and that he held good and serious talks in Damascus.

Within this framework, making any progress in the peace process on the Syrian track depends on the ideas the Israelis will present which will contribute to real peace—peace that is based on the resolutions of international legitimacy and the land-for-peace principle. It is also based on responding to the requirements of the peace process, foremost of which is full withdrawal from the Golan and south Lebanon, removing the settlements, and evacuating the settlers.

All know that unless the Israelis respond to these elements and principles, the peace process will be placed in a dangerous stalemate and the entire process will face frustration. The Israelis will be responsible for the consequences of such a situation. There is no doubt that their statements and intransigent positions, which deliberately evade implementing the requirements of peace, prove that they do not want to make just and comprehensive peace and do not want to withdraw from the Golan and south Lebanon. This puts the peace process at a crossroad and face to face with challenges and difficulties that cannot be overcome without returning to the principles of the international legitimacy, right, and justice.

Before the U.S. secretary of state's tour, the Israelis expressed pessimism concerning the results that Secretary Christopher could realize—results that would contribute to advancing the peace process. In this respect, more statements were made by Israeli officials saying that Christopher would not make any progress during his tour, and that if no agreement was reached with Syria by 1995, then no agreement would be made after that.

Such talk is self-explanatory and does not mean anything to Syria, which emphasized its position and adherence to the constants and principles of the peace process based on its eagerness to realize solid peace in the region, with the aim of attaining real and serious implementation of the resolutions of international legitimacy, foremost of which are Resolutions 242, 338, and 425.

Syria and the international community are aware that partial solutions, separate deals, and phased settlements do not make peace and do not ensure security and stability. The developments and facts emphasize the truth and soundness of the Syrian position, and also prove that Syria is the key to the peace process in the region, and that Syria's role is central to reach just and comprehensive peace.

Syria does not just want peace, but wants peace that lasts, peace that gives rights to their owners and ensures dignity, and peace that is based on justice, comprehensiveness, and equality away from hegemony, bargaining, and blackmailing maneuvers which Israel uses.

The road to peace is clear. It is based on respect for the international law and land-for-peace principle.

'Hostile' Position Condemned

JN0812073994 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0545 GMT 8 Dec 94

[Press review]

[FBIS Translated Text] TISHRIN discusses U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's tour in the region which aims to discuss means to boost the peace process on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks.

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The paper says: Christopher has said his talks with President Hafiz al-Asad were serious. However, as soon as he arrived in Israel, the Israeli rulers preoccupied him with settling a tempestuous crisis which may be called the crisis of the self-rule authority, or the crisis of the Oslo agreement. This is because the agreement has apparently failed to meet Israel's requirements and schemes despite its feeble and fragile nature.

The paper adds: The crisis of the Oslo agreement exposes Israel's position which is hostile to the process of the just and comprehensive peace, which Syria has called for, and is calling for.

The paper adds: Syria has repeatedly warned against the lame agreements and separate deals because they are doomed to fail and because genuine peace can only be established with the support of the Arab masses, which do not yield to agreements that do not meet their aspirations, return the territory, or put an end to Israel's settlement, aggressive, and expansionist policy.

The paper voices the conviction that the just and honorable peace that ends occupation is the only alternative to this agreement.

The paper adds: The Israeli rulers' insistence on following the policy of evasion and intransigence toward Syria and their refusal to make a complete withdrawal from the Golan Heights and southern Lebanon is yet more proof that they have not yet risen to the level of the required peace. It is also proof that they are not even serious about building a strong peace in the Middle East.

In an article, AL-THAWRAH says: Syria, which confidently proceeds with its policy that is keen on establishing the just and comprehensive peace, has stressed through President Hafiz al-Asad that it responds favorably to the U.S. efforts. It also appreciated these intensive efforts that seek to make the peace process arrive at its goal, the achievement of the just and comprehensive peace.

The paper stresses that Syria is not interested in what Israel wants or does not want before it announces its full commitment to complete withdrawal from the Golan Heights and southern Lebanon. The paper says Syria will continue to wager on the U.S. role to force Israel to respond to international legitimacy in order to establish a just and comprehensive peace that will return rights and territory in full and achieve security, peace, and stability for all in the region.

In an editorial, AL-BA'TH says: Syria is demanding that Israeli troops withdrawal from the Golan Heights and southern Lebanon as an indispensable basis for establishing a just and comprehensive peace. This is because Syria genuinely wants a real peace, in implementation of the principles of international legitimacy, and it wants the state of war to end. Therefore, it wants a peace that would give each party its rights and serve the legitimate interests of all sides.

The paper underlines the argument of full peace in return for full withdrawal. The paper reviews the position on the Israeli rulers' stand, which based on evasion, procrastination, and rejection of the requirements of peace.

The paper says: The continuation of the Israeli conduct, which is based on expansion, hegemony, and absolute tutelage over all parties in the region, makes Rabin say Israel cannot pay the price Syria is demanding, nor will he pay such a price. Such a position makes us say to Rabin that the secret negotiations and secret channels, which Rabin dreams of having on the Syrian track, are only dreams and hopes that cannot be realized. Syria has nothing to hide from its people and nation and world public opinion. Nor does not speak a double language or deal in a double policy. Its positions are clear and it embodies the aspirations, hopes, and desires of its people for the sake of a just and comprehensive peace. What is true on the Syria track is also true on the Lebanese. The two tracks are one and the position and the goal is one; that is to regain the territory and establish the just and comprehensive peace. Syria and Lebanon will accept nothing else.

Resistance to 'Blackmail' Stressed

JN0812163994 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1230 GMT 8 Dec 94

[Station commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] Gentlemen: U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher concluded talks with Israel's Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin and Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres and left the region without managing to mellow Israel's stubbornness. Soon after, Yitzhaq Rabin demanded Oslo-style secret negotiations. Peres, meanwhile, said there is no way Israel will meet Syria's demand that Israel state a willingness to effect a complete withdrawal from the Golan Heights and southern Lebanon in a land-for-peace deal. Clearly Israel's leaders are just not interested in meeting the requirements of the peace process, above all withdrawal from the occupied territories. Lest their anti-peace posture be exposed, Israel's leaders stretch their security demands. All the separate deals that they concluded have failed to bring them the security they want; the West Bank and the Gaza Strip are seething. Neither the Israeli military nor the limited self-rule authority has had any succees against the intifadah. Nor does it seem likely they will fare any better any time soon for the simple reason that the Oslo accord does not begin to satisfy minimum Palestinian rights or hold out the promise of an end to occupation or self-determination for a people that Israel wants to uproot and rob of their identity and use as a stepping stone for its expansionist game plans.

Warren Christopher was not off the mark when he said in occupied Jerusalem that the absence of peace on the Syrian-Israeli front will only exacerbate violence in the region. This is because the deals Israel and the PLO

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concluded do not take the Middle East a single step closer to peace. The deals lack the provisions of a fair settlement and popular Palestinian and Arab support, besides being in conflict with UN Security Council resolutions that mandate a complete Israeli pullout and reversal of the Israeli annexation of Jerusalem.

Without a doubt, Mr. Christopher, who has often enough recognized Syria's serious approach to peace, realizes that Israel is trying to build a rickety peace structure and that Syria's call for a fair and universal and real peace is the only way out from the impasse.

The Oslo agreement has led to a veritable impasse that risks dire consequences. Israel's problem is that Syria does not deal with illusions nor will it be party to lame settlements. Syria is not about to bargain away UN Security Council resolutions for vague promises and acrobatic Israeli utterances about peace. Syria is interested in a real and dignifying peace that must go down well with Arab masses and future Arab generations. This kind of peace necessarily calls for rights to be restituted, occupation to be removed, and all manner of injustice, coercion, and hegemony to be erased. Clearly, Israel's leaders still cling to their expansionist schemes. It remains for them to summon the courage to tell their people in no uncertain terms that peace and settlements are mutually exclusive. They must further point out to them that peace and occupation are also incompatible and that any arrangement that fails to end occupation is doomed. There is widespread recognition in Israel that the Oslo agreement has come to nothing, but the responsibility for that is attached to the self-rule authority.

Syria has a real interest in peace with Israel. Syria wants to work out peace in broad daylight, not behind closed doors. Syria wants the kind of peace that sees territory and rights restored. Syria knows that it has the support of the international community, its stand being consistent with UN resolutions. Syria will never bow to Israeli blackmail or deviate a single inch from its stand. It is not Syria that stands in the camp opposed to UN resolutions. It is Israel that clings to occupation and settlements. Israel's practices contradict any peace protestations by its rulers. For peace to survive, it must be just, comprehensive, and honorable.

Damascus Cites Media on Christopher Visit

JN0812092394 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0515 GMT 8 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Occupied Palestine—Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin said following his meeting yesterday with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher that difficulties can be overcome in the future. Rabin did not touch on the issue of Israeli withdrawal from the occupied Golan and did not note Israel's desire to comply with the resolutions of international legitimacy. Rabin said it is too early to speak about a change in content, adding that efforts are now focused on the Syrian track. He expressed hope that a comfortable and relaxed atmosphere will be created, and that fewer statements will be made, in order to give the peace opportunity a chance to achieve progress, as he put it. Rabin called for holding direct, secret talks between Israel and Syria, noting that there is a need for holding such talks. He said: We have not succeeded in reaching an agreement with an Arab country without holding talks that are unknown to public opinion. It is noteworthy that Israel insists on holding secret talks with Syria—a matter always rejected by Syria because peace talks cannot be held in dark alleys.

Christopher said he has the impression that there is much determination to go ahead with the peace process, and at the same time, there is also adherence to what he called as the security arrangements and the needs of Israel. He said he briefed Rabin on the results of the talks he held in Damascus. Christopher expressed his belief that the gap could be narrowed, although this needs more efforts. He said: It is known that both sides intend to continue the process in a serious manner. Christopher renewed the U.S. commitment to safeguard Israel's security and to support it. He said he discussed with Rabin the issue of negotiations between the limited self-rule authority and Israel. He added that he will ask Yasir 'Arafat to fulfill his pledges in accordance with the Oslo accord. Christopher affirmed that the United States will urge the donor states to extend assistance to the limited self-rule authority to improve the economic situation in the self-rule area.

The Israeli radio cited Rabin as saying that he welcomes the mission of Christopher, who spares no efforts to visit the region frequently to provide momentum to the peace process. Following his meeting with Christopher, Rabin added: We have advanced on the road to peace. There are difficulties, but we should continue the efforts. Rabin expressed his appreciation for U.S. assistance and participation in providing momentum to the peace process.

AFP cited Rabin as saying: Christopher conveyed to me an impression that a number of difficulties can be overcome in the future. AFP added: Christopher noted the existence of real opportunities to reach a peace agreement between Israel and Syria. However, he did not define the nature of these opportunities while Israel adheres to the occupation of territories. Christopher warned in his statements that it is impossible to go back, adding that the parties should advance toward peace.

REUTER cited Rabin as saying that Christopher's mission has failed to narrow the gap in the peace process. Rabin added: I cannot yet clearly see tangible improvement in positions. Rabin disregarded the Israeli practices aimed at obstructing the peace process. He also disregarded the issue of Israeli withdrawal from the occupied Arab territory as a prelude to achieving a comprehensive peace.

Israeli radio also cited Warren Christopher as saying that any peace agreement between Israel and Syria should take into consideration what he termed Israeli security

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needs. Christopher said the United States does not advise Israel to reach peace with Syria without security guarantees.

Regarding the implementation of the Declaration of Principles [DOP] between Israel and the PLO, Christopher said: Israel cannot withdraw its forces from the West Bank before the PLO imposes its control over the self-rule areas. He said the failure to achieve a breakthrough on the Syrian-Israeli track would cause more bloodshed in this region. Christopher added that the escalation in what he called acts of violence in Gaza and the Hamas [the Islamic Resistance Movement] attacks underscore the importance of the Syrian-Israeli tracks.

The Radio L'Orient correspondent in occupied Jerusalem cited a source in the delegation accompanying the U.S. secretary of state as saying that the gap between the Israeli and Syrian positions has been narrowed. The correspondent said the source denied a Tel Aviv report that Syria and Israel have agreed to open a negotiating channel which includes, in addition to both countries' ambassadors, military working teams to discuss the security arrangements.

AP cited an Israeli official, who was commenting on Christopher's visit to the region, as saying that the talks with Syria would collapse if no progress was achieved by the end of 1995. The Israeli official added that, in light of what he terms violence, there is no reason to proceed expeditiously with the limited Palestinian self-rule.

Following his meeting in occupied Jerusalem yesterday with Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres, Christopher said: I am departing. I am encouraged because the picture is not so gloomy. Following my talks, I found that the sky is becoming clear. Christopher described his talks with President Hafiz al-Asad as very good, expressing his conviction that the peace process will make progress. He added that both sides want the United States to continue its efforts.

Christopher said at a joint news conference with the Israeli foreign minister that the picture with regard to the Syrian-Israel track is not gloomy. Christopher added that he noted here that all parties are determined to resume talks with Syria. Peres expressed his profound appreciation of the ceaseless efforts exerted by the United States to bring momentum to the peace process and to narrow the gaps between the Syrian and Israeli positions. Peres said no change has occurred in the talks with Syria, adding that he discussed with the U.S. secretary many economic issues on the Palestinian track and ways to support the Palestinian Authority and to expedite financial aid in order to invigorate the economic situation in the self-rule area and to hold the elections in these areas, as well as the arrangements that should be taken to save the Israelis from what he called danger. Peres said that he discussed with Christopher the efforts that should be exerted to increase Israel's water resources in accordance with the Israeli-Jordanian agreement.

U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher held a meeting with Yasir 'Arafat, chairman of the Palestinian limited self-rule authority in Gaza and Jericho, to discuss the obstacles preventing the implementation of self-rule. 'Arafat reiterated at a joint news conference with Christopher yesterday that he will protect the security of Israelis when the self-rule authority expands to the West Bank. 'Arafat warned his opponents, saying: Everybody should know that there is one Palestinian national authority in the Palestinian territory and that all should respect the law. 'Arafat said: There is a need for holding elections in the self-rule areas as soon as possible.

Christopher said at the joint news conference that 'Arafat clearly informed him that he is aware of his responsibilities in terms of fighting terrorism and violence, as he put it. Christopher added: 'Arafat is aware that there will be no peace without security for Israel and the Palestinians. Christopher said that Israel and the self-rule authority are determined to implement the self-rule agreement. He added, however, that stopping at this point will reward the terrorists, as he put it.

Israeli radio cited 'Arafat as saying, during his meeting with Christopher, that he understands and takes into consideration the security issues that are of concern to Israel. He added that he is ready to discuss it with the Israeli side. The radio added that 'Arafat affirmed that the Israeli and Palestinian sides should continue with the peace process.

Paper: Arabs Join Israeli 'Campaigns'

JN0212162594 Damascus AL-BA'TH in Arabic 28 Nov 94 p 1

[Editorial: "Comprehensive Peace Is Our Goal"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The deception campaigns launched against Syria and its firm and principled policy toward the peace process are not restricted to the Israeli officials. There are others who speak Arabic and who have become eager to join the Israeli band in their attempt to harm Syria, especially concerning the peace process.

These people began fabricating lies about the Syrian position with the aim of hurting this position, and then concocted media battles that only serve the enemies of the Arabs. However, as has been clear since the Corrective Movement led by President Hafiz al-Asad, Syria refuses to engage in media vituperations with any Arab party for any reason because Syria believes that such vituperations only serve the nation's enemies. Therefore, it has entrenched a firm policy that gives priority to what is public rather than what is personal and does not engage in any activity that might harm the Arab nation and its history.

When Syria does this, it does not mean that it is unable to answer back to this or that harm-doer. Syria always prefers to keep away from what is marginal, and to stick

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to what is more important, and then to work for developing the Arab positions in a manner that serves the pan-Arab and national causes.

It is beneficial to say that Syria, which went willingly to the Madrid conference out of its belief in a just, comprehensive, peaceful settlement, did everything possible to maintain coordination and consultation among the Arab parties to the peace process because it believed and still believes that had coordination continued the way it should, the Arab parties would have realized the objectives for which they have offered many sacrifices.

It is enough to say that what has occurred on the Palestinian and Jordanian sides has not achieved the minimum expected result for either party. Moreover, the policy of separate deals created new conditions whose results will be very difficult to predict. What happened in Gaza and elsewhere proves that the agreements made between certain Arab parties and Israel have nothing to do with a just and comprehensive peace because such agreements are not based on the resolutions of international legitimacy, which form the basis of the peace process.

When we speak about partial and separate agreements, we aim to point out the danger of such agreements to the Arabs and their national and pan-Arab causes. Therefore, Syria, which has emphasized that peace is its strategic option, will continue to work with all parties concerned to render the peace process successful in order to realize this noble objective of a just and comprehensive peace based on the resolutions of international legitimacy that guarantee to the Arabs the restoration of their full rights and preserve their dignity.

Khaddam, al-Zu'bi Receive Kuwaiti Assembly Speaker

JN0812142894 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1215 GMT 8 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] At 1230 today, Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam received Mr. Ahmad 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Sa'dun, speaker of the Kuwaiti National Assembly, and his delegation. Shakir Is'ayyid, chairman of the Arab and International Affairs Committee at the People's Assembly, and Kuwait's ambassador in Damascus attended the session. They talked about Arab developments, the peace process, and ties between the two brotherly countries.

Earlier today, the Kuwaiti delegation called on Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zu'bi to discuss ties.

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Afghanistan

Peace Conference Draws To Close in Tehran

No Date Set for Cease-Fire

LD0712121194 Tehran IRNA in English 1105 GMT 7 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Dec. 7, IRNA—Head of the Afghan delegation Hoseyn 'Alemi Balkhi and spokesman of the coordinating council of Afghan opposition groups Karim Khalili here Tuesday [6 December] expressed satisfaction over the trend of Tehran peace conference and said that reaching an agreement for an all-embracing peace in Afghanistan was not beyond expectation.

Speaking to IRNA in separate interviews, the two Afghan officials said that so far no agreement has been reached on the exact date for the establishment of a cease-fire in Afghanistan. AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE (AFP) in a report last Saturday said that Afghan mojahedin groups had agreed to announce cease-fire in their country as of December 15. Balkhi added that the exact date of the cease-fire is to be determined by a commission which is to be formed later.

Meanwhile, Khalili said that the coordinating council had agreed with the cease-fire in general but no talks had so far been held on the exact date for its implementation.

The two officials expressed hope that after 16 years of conflict, peace and tranquility would restore to Afghanistan as a result of the efforts made by the Islamic Republic of Iran and Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC).

The OIC and Iran's Foreign Ministry initiated peace talks with the participatioin of all Afghan rival groups as well as a representative from the United Nations to study the ways and means of restoring peace to Afghanistan. The ongoing meeting convened here last week.

Factions Reach 'Common Viewpoint'

LD0712174494 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 7 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Indirect talks between plenipotentiary representatives of eight Afghan jihadi parties ended in Tehran this evening. The sides managed to reach common viewpoints on the establishment of peace in Afghanistan.

According to our correspondent's report, this round of the talks, which lasted for seven days, was held under the auspices of the representative of the Islamic Conference Organization and with the participation of envoys from the United Nations and Pakistan.

Mr. Musavi, our country's representative at the talks, expressed satisfaction at the trend of talks and stressed that all groups have reached agreement on the three-point plan for a cease-fire, a transitional period, and free elections. He said it has been decided that the results of this meeting be raised at the upcoming conference of the Islamic countries in Casablanca.

According to the same report, Mr. Jarir, the representative of the [coordination] council of Afghanistan's Islamic revolution, also expressed satisfaction about the talks and said that the presence of the majority of Afghan jihadi groups at the Tehran session can guarantee a positive outcome for the talks.

The representative of Mr. Rabbani's faction described the outcome of the talks as useful and said that the Tehran session reviewed practical ways of establishing peace and the sides became acquainted with each others' viewpoints.

Session Concluded as 'Positive'

NC0812094194 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0430 GMT 8 Dec 94

[News Report—italicized passages are recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] After eight days of discussion and debate, the representatives of the groups in Afghanistan concluded their session in Tehran. This session was convened at the request of the Islamic Conference Organization [ICO] and was held in the presence of the ICO secretary general and an emissary of the United Nations.

The representatives of the Afghan groups described this session as positive. At the end of the session last night our political correspondent spoke to two of the representatives of the Afghan groups and to the director general for Western Asia, who headed the Iranian delegation participating in these talks, to assess the outcome. Our correspondent initially sought the views of Warsaji, the Afghan president's emissary:

[Unidentified correspondent] *As the representative of the Coordination Council of the Islamic revolution in Afghanistan, could you please tell us about the topics discussed at this session and the results?*

[Warsaji, in Dari] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful.

The Supreme Coordination Council [SCC] welcomes every effort aimed at ensuring peace and security in Afghanistan. This was why the SCC came to Tehran with hopes that its presence at the peace session in Tehran would help the problems of Afghanistan to reach a positive outcome and find ways and means for a solution.

We felt that in Tehran the talks and understanding achieved so cohesively were probably beneficial from our vantage point. We are optimistic that the second and third rounds of these talks will commence as soon as possible. From our perspective, the talks held in Tehran

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were an effective and positive step. The current talks in Tehran had the advantage in that the majority of factions participated.

Our political correspondent spoke to Jarir, the representative of the SCC of the Islamic Revolution in Afghanistan, regarding the Tehran talks:

[Correspondent] *Could you please tell us how you view the results of the Tehran session and to what extent can this session fruitfully contribute to a durable peace in Afghanistan?*

[Jarir] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful.

There is immense optimism and we are satisfied with our talks. We are hopeful that we can achieve a durable peace. The way has been paved and, God willing, we can soon give some glad tidings to the Afghans and all the sides that want peace and security in our country.

We express our appreciation of the efforts of the Islamic Republic of Iran for the Afghans during our 14-year jehad as well as in establishing a durable cease-fire and peace.

To further appraise the Tehran session, our colleague spoke to Musavi, the director general of the West Asia desk at the Foreign Ministry.

[Musavi] *These talks, as you know, were held at the invitation of the ICO to discuss the Afghanistan issue from various aspects. From the 10 groups that were invited, eight participated with the cooperation of the ICO, the United Nations, and the two neighboring countries of Iran and Pakistan.*

We achieved considerable success, which could be a basis for subsequent talks. It was decided that the talks should be continued. An interesting feature was that the need for a cease-fire was unanimously stressed and agreed upon by all the groups. It appears that further talks will assist us in reaching the necessary conditions for a cease-fire and toward the ratification and practical implementation of other issues such as supervising the cease-fire.

All the groups concurred that these talks were extremely positive and useful and that they should continue. They are very optimistic as to their outcome. The results of this session will be conveyed to the summit session of the ICO, which was hosted by the Islamic Republic of Iran at the behest of the ICO.

Second Round Proposed

LD0812034994 Tehran IRNA in English 0323 GMT 8 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Dec. 7, IRNA—Head of the Afghan delegation to Tehran peace conference Hussein Alemi Balkhi at the end of the 9-day indirect negotiations here Wednesday [7 December] night said "Tehran conference was a successful and positive step towards bringing about peace in Afghanistan."

He also told IRNA that the second round of Afghan peace talks will start after the conclusion of the meeting of the heads of the member countries of Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) [ICO]. The meeting of the heads of the OIC's member countries is to open in Morocco on December 14.

The exact date and place of the second round of peace talks have yet to be announced, Balkhi said.

He also said that the viewpoints of the delegation sent by the Afghani Government and the delegation of the coordinating council of Afghan opposition groups, are very close on the establishmant of a ceasefire in Afghanistan, course of transition of power and selection of the future government of Afghanistan.

Calling the transition of power as a need to bring about peace in Afghanistan, Balkhi said that in case of establishing a lawful body consisting of the jihadi groups, President Borhanoddin Rabbani will be ready to relinquish his position.

The OIC and Iranian Foreign Ministry initiated peace talks with the participation of 20 plenipotentiary representatives of Afghani groups as well as a representative from the United Nations to study the ways and means of restoring peace to Afghanistan.

France Says Ready To Help Revive Railway Project

LD0712181094 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 7 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] The French government has expressed readiness to cooperate with the Islamic State of Afghanistan on the project of railway construction in Afghanistan [words indistinct] and on cultural areas.

This point was stated today by [words indistinct], charge d'affaires of the French Embassy in Kabul at a meeting with esteemed [words indistinct]. At this meeting the charge d'affaires of the French Embassy in Kabul pledged cooperation and (? stated that his government) will put (? the required materials) at the disposal of the Islamic State of Afghanistan.

Expressing appreciation for the French government's cooperation at the present time, the minister of planning spoke about every cooperation in this respect.

The railway project of Afghanistan which was surveyed by the French government in 1971 and was finalized by experts, will link Kabul with Hajigak Mine, Bamian, Maydan, Ghazni, Qandahar, Herat, and Nimroz as well as the neighboring countries of Iran, Pakistan, and Turkmenistan.

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Bangladesh

UN Peacekeepers Reported To Withdraw From Bihac

BK0712155794 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in English 1530 GMT 7 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The United Nations is reported to be planning to withdraw half of the 1,200 Bangladeshi peacekeeping troops who had been trapped in the Bosnian Muslim enclave of Bihac by Bosnian Serb forces for several weeks. The Bangladeshis were sent into Bihac without adequate supplies and the UN says the situation has become untenable because of the Serb refusal to let all but the bare minimum of supplies through. The operation to withdraw the Bangladeshi troops was due to have begun later today, but it is being delayed because negotiations are still continuing.

'At Least' 50 Injured in Strike Clashes

BK0712161194 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 7 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In Bangladesh, at least 50 people have been injured in clashes during a nationwide general strike called by the opposition parties. The clashes took place mainly in Sirajganj and Chittagong between supporters of the ruling BNP [Bangladesh Nationalist Party] and the opposition parties.

The strike, which began at 0600 this morning, disrupted normal life in many places. In Dhaka, vehicles were off the roads and shops, business centers, offices, and educational institutions were closed. The opposition is demanding general elections under a neutral caretaker government.

Strike Ends

BK0812093094 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 8 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In Bangladesh, the opposition-sponsored nationwide strike ended at 1200 today without further reports of violence. Normal life was affected this morning also as shops and business establishments had been closed and traffic was off the roads. Paramilitary and riot police patrolled the streets of Dhaka as thousands of opposition activists marched shouting antigovernment slogans.

Latest reports say about 300 people were injured in clashes yesterday between supporters of the ruling and opposition parties in various parts of the country. The strike began yesterday and was called by the opposition demanding general elections under a neutral caretaker government.

Caretaker Government Demands Said Unconstitutional

BK0812023094 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in English 0130 GMT 8 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Prime Minister Khaleda Ziaur Rahman says her government will continue to fulfill the pledges it made to the people at any cost and honor the people's verdict.

Addressing a big public meeting at Kesabpur College ground in Jessore yesterday, Begum Ziaur Rahman vowed to go ahead with the government's socioeconomic development programs braving all hindrances. She urged the people to remain alert against all sorts of disruptive activities and help carry out the ongoing development programs smoothly for the betterment of the people.

The prime minister said the observance of frequent hartals [strikes], sieges, and other disruptive programs is telling upon the national economy and causing immense sufferings of the people. She said the organizers of such destructive acitivities could not be friends of the people. Besides, having disastrous impact on the national economy, observance of frequent hartals also infringes upon the rights of the people. Begum Ziaur Rahman said they highly speak of parliamentary democracy but they do not believe in it themselves. Likewise, they raise unconstitutional demands although they speak about the sanctity of the constitution.

Begum Ziaur Rahman said the constitution does not stipulate the provision of nominating a nonelected person as the prime minister but they want to see it implemented. The prime minister said a section of opposition parties is raising unconstitutional demand of forming the so-called caretaker government but they had won in most of the by-elections held under the BNP [Bangladesh Nationalist Party] Government. Referring to the recently passed bill for strengthening the Election Commission, Begum Ziaur Rahman said the BNP Government always want to strengthen the Election Commission to enable it to conduct free, fair, and impartial elections. She said the introduction of identity cards will enable every voter to cast his or her vote as a proud citizen of the country.

India

Commentary Welcomes U.S. Position on Kashmir

BK0412120994 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 4 Dec 94

[Commentary by M.K. Dhar]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] It is indeed heartening to note that an increasing number of countries now unreservedly accept India's genuine complaint about Pakistan's sponsorship of terrorism in Kashmir and do not hesitate to speak out and condemn it in very clear terms. The U.S.

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ambassador to India, Mr. Frank Wisner, deserves appreciation for having highlighted the issue in the course of his address to the prestigious Asia Society in Washington. He maintained that the U.S. had voiced strong opposition to transborder terrorism which has disrupted normal life in the state as a disrupting trend. He went along with India's policy of initiating a political process in the state and holding of elections to the Assembly which paves the way for purposeful political negotiations.

Observations such as these made earlier also by several other countries go to confirm that Pakistan's evil deeds in Kashmir have not escaped international attention and that its false and motivated propaganda about alleged human rights abuses and self-determination is being rejected with the contempt it deserves. No longer can Pakistan hoodwink world opinion and camouflage its brazen interference in the internal affairs of another country and continue to violate international law and norms of civilized behavior with impunity.

Ambassador Wisner's signal to Pakistan is clear—stop sponsoring terrorism against India and let the people of Kashmir shape their future themselves in peace and without outside interference. Mr. Wisner's advice to both India and Pakistan to set aside the Kashmir issue is well taken. In this context, countries such as the United States, which have considerable clout in Pakistan, would do yeoman service by persuading Islamabad to accept India's repeated and sincere offer for resumption of bilateral discussions to resolve all outstanding issues. The arrogance shown by Pakistan and saying a firm no to the only civilized course, that is, dialogue, betrays its lack of faith in peaceful methods. The relations between India and the United States have shown steady improvement since the summit-level talks between President Clinton and Prime Minister Narasimha Rao. The U.S. view as articulated by Mr. Wisner is that India, by virtue of its size, influence, and economic potential, has moved into the ranks of leading world powers.

Delhi TV Previews Upcoming Talks With U.S.

BK0512072394 Delhi Doordarshan Television Network in English 1630 GMT 4 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] India and the United States are to begin another round of talks on bilateral market access for textiles in Geneva from tomorrow. These are likely to be followed by another round of talks with the European Community [as heard] as well. A report on the issues involved:

[Begin recording] [Correspondent Uma Bhatnagar] The forthcoming talks assume added significance in view of the fact that the USA and the European Community together account for nearly 60 percent of India's textile exports. Since the Uruguay round of GATT negotiations, periodic talks have been held between India and the U.S. as well as with the EC countries to see if there could be an increase in the market access on a bilateral basis. At the earlier rounds, the USA demanded a reduction in the existing tariff imposed by India on imports from the U.S. and a more liberal access to the Indian textile market. The Indian stand has been that it cannot give any concessions without a significant reciprocal response from the USA. Indian delegations at these talks had demanded an improvement and uplift in the quota allocations, especially in the handloom and the made-up sectors. The textile secretary, Mr. T.S.R. Subramanian, has said that India is hopeful of arriving at a mutually beneficial and satisfactory agreement in the forthcoming talks.

[Subramanian] (?In) broad terms, we will look forward to a better market possibility and we hope to get substantial (?agreement). This time, if we find a mutual agreement, it is a question of our being satisfied with what they offer and their being satisfied with what we offer. If there is a minimum level of satisfaction on both sides, you could say that we will go for the next level of agreement; if not, I won't say the talks will fail; I would say that we will continue to talk again. [end recording]

Assembly Elections in Four States Viewed

BK0612061994 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 6 Dec 94

[Commentary by K.S. Ramamurthy]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Elections held for the assemblies of Goa and Sikkim on 16 November, and for those of Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh in phases on 26 November and the first and fifth of this month have aroused nationwide interest. The reason is not far to seek. The outcome of these polls may give an indication of what is in store for the various national parties in the elections early in February for the assemblies of Maharashtra, Gujarat, Bihar, Orissa, Arunachal Pradesh, and Manipur. Moreover, the results may give valuable clues as to what might happen in the Lok Sabha polls which is less than 18 months away.

The campaigns in the four states were unlike any other before. They were shorn of the trappings associated with elections, thanks to the Election Commission's strictly enforced code of conduct. Notwithstanding the code and the Election Commission's supervisory presence everywhere, not to speak of the unprecedented deployment of security forces, polling was not entirely incident free. Andhra Pradesh, in particular, saw violence reminiscent of many elections in the past. Twenty-seven persons lost their lives in the Telingana districts of Warangal and Karimnagar in landmine explosions on 26 November and again three days later. The explosions have been attributed to the naxalite outfit—the People's War Group—which had given a call for poll boycott. This, however, did not deter the voters. It has been reported that 55 percent of the voters exercized their franchise in the naxalite infested Telingana region. Five state ministers are seeking reelection from the region.

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The average turnout of voters in Andhra Pradesh is estimated at 65 to 70 percent, and in Goa and Sikkim—70 percent. In the last election held in Goa in 1989, the 40 seats were nearly equally divided between the Congress and the Maharashtrawadi Gomantak Party. In Sikkim, the Sikkim Sangram Parishad had a monopoly of seats in 1989. It won all the 32 seats. In Andhra Pradesh, the Muslims who constitute 14 percent of the electorate can tilt the balance in over 60 constituencies. It is the prime minister's home state and the results will be keenly watched. In Karnataka, the Congress has always retained its base vote of 40 percent. It held on to this even in 1983 and 1985 when it did not win office. The BJP [Bharatiya Janata party] has never secured even 8 percent of the votes in Karnataka except in the Lok Sabha election of 1991 when it won an unprecedented 29 percent. It is banking on this performance. The candidates in all the four states will keep their fingers crossed until Friday when counting begins.

Election Commission Announces Voting Dates

BK0812092094 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 8 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Election Commission has announced dates for polls in five states: Bihar, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Orissa, and Arunachal Pradesh. A notification issued by the commission in New Delhi says polling in Bihar will take place on the 20th, 25th, and 28th of February next year. In Gujarat, election will be held on the 4th and 8th of February, and Maharashtra and Orissa will go to the polls on the 9th and 12 of February. In Arunachal Pradesh, the assembly election will be held on the 4th of February next year. The commission has made it clear that elections in these states will not take place if the photo identity cards are not supplied to voters. The state governments going to polls will be required to furnish a certificate that photo identity cards have been supplied to all eligible voters.

Counting of votes for the current round assembly elections in Goa, Sikkim, Andhra Pradesh, and Karnataka begins tomorrow morning. Reports received from state capitals say that arrangements are complete for taking up this process. All counting places are being barricaded and entry into the counting booths will be restricted to authorized agents of candidates and special pass holders. Peaceful repolling, meanwhile, is in progress in all the 186 booths in Alampur Assembly Constituency of Andhra Pradesh amidst tight security. Repoll is also in progress in Parakal and Narasimhpet constituencies in Warangal District of the state. Repolling was ordered in these places following complaints of electoral malpractices.

Force Level of Navy 'Set To Decline'

BK0712134394 Delhi INDIAN EXPRESS in English 3 Dec 94 pp 1

[FBIS Transcribed Text] New Delhi—The force level of the Indian Navy is set to decline in the next few years when old ships including aircraft carriers retire, with replacements not forthcoming for lack of funds Chief of Naval Staff Admiral Vijai Singh Shekhawat said here on Thursday [8 December].

"The gap will begin to show in the next few years. And it will widen", Admiral Shekhawat said bluntly in a news conference in the run-up to the the Navy Day on December 4.

However, even as DRDO's [Defense Research and Development Organization] breakthrough in missiles and sensors may sustain the Navy's firepower, the sophisticated indigenous weaponry to be inducted into new ships cannot fully make up for the sheer decline in the number of vessels. "Quantity has a quality of its own", the chief said pointing out that India, given the large sea area was essentially an island nation.

With 95 percent of the country's trade being sea-borne, the demands on the Indian Navy are bound to increase with the opening up of the economy. Matching investments will have to be made in the Navy so that it ensures free and safe passage for Indian goods. "We need to have a co-ordinated over-all approach towards the management of our maritime affairs".

Devaluation and inflation have reduced the naval budget by 50 percent, the chief said in the course of a detailed exposition on the effects of declining resources.

Besides "falling force levels", for want of fresh orders the shipyards were in serious difficulty, not only financially, but in terms of loss of skills.

Referring to the interrupted HDW [Howaldtswerke] submarine assembly programme at Mazgaon docks, Admiral Shekhawat said that the new danger was dissipation of expertise acquired over several years. The Navy was the first to indigenise and this would be the corner- stone of its future strategy.

The chief, moving to the specifics, said that Navy would like work to begin on the air defence ship, aimed at replacing the ageing aircraft carriers. The plans were ready, but funds have not been released. "The carriers art getting old. We have to face it" .

The other pressing priority for the Navy was to move out of Bombay and relocate at Karwar, as earlier decided by the Government. Pointing out that it take up to 20 years to build a naval base, he said that delays by the year not only has led to substantial cost overuns but has jeopardised other plans as well. After the proposed thinning out of Bombay, the naval dockyard there could handle major tasks and possibly enter ship-building.

Up to a dozen new ships would be joining the fleet beginning from 1996 till the turn of the century, the chief said pointing out that these were ordered years ago. Three of the Delhi class and three of the Godavari follow-on class destroyers would be inducted, along with four of the Khukri class, a tanker and a landing craft.

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Admiral Shekhawat however pointed out that navies, the world over, had grown by "stops and starts". Resource constraint was a universal problem that had crippled many a navy during its growth. The current attempt however, was to point out that the priority, the navy should have been accorded, because of sheer geographical and economic factors was "not forthcoming".

'Major Reshuffle' in Navy Personnel Noted

BK0712134994 Delhi THE HINDUSTAN TIMES in English 3 Dec 94 pp 1, 9

[FBIS Transcribed Text] New Delhi, Dec. 1—While Lt-Gen. [Lieutenant-General] J. S. Bhatnagar took over as the Director-General of Supplies and Transport (DGST) at Army Headquarters today in a major reshuffle in Indian Navy, Vice-Admiral Vishnu Bhagwat, the Deputy Chief of Naval Staff, was appointed as Flag Officer Commanding in Chief, Western Naval Command.

Admiral Bhagwat would replace Vice-Admiraal K. A. S. Z. Raju, who retired on Dec. 31.

Vice-Admiral Premvir Das, presently posted at Naval headquarters, has been appointed as Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Eastern Naval Command.

Admiral Das would replace Admiral Guha who retires in the next few months. Rear Admiral Manvendra Singh, Flag Officer Commanding, Western Naval Fleet has been promoted to the rank of Vice-Admiral and shifted to Naval Headquarters here. Lt-Gen. Bhatnagar, meanwhile, took charge from Lt-Gen. Kishen Bhatia this morning., Lt-Gen. Bhatnagar, commissioned in ASC, has many important command, staff and instructional tenures to his credit.

General Bhatnagar is a highly decorated soldier with AVSM, VSM and Chief of the Army Staff's Commendation Card in his kitty. Before taking over as Director-General of Supplies and Transport at Army Headquarters he was Major General (Administration) at Northern Command headquarters at Udhampur.

Commercial Use for PSLV Planned

BK0812065394 Delhi Doordarshan Television Network in English 1630 GMT 7 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] After the successful launch of the Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle, PSLV, the government has decided to convert it into a commercial venture. The minister of state for science and technology, Mr. Bhuvanesh Chaturvedi, told the Lok Sabha today that the PSLV is in the developmental stage and will be ready for operational launch services, both for internal lease and on commercial basis, after the next successful developmental flight. He said the PSLV can launch remote sensing satellites, as well as, low earth satellites for communication.

Official Briefs on INSAT Developments

BK0812115894 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 8 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The INSAT [Indian National Satellite] -2C flight model structure is ready and integration of subsystems has commenced. This was stated by the minister of state in the Prime Minister's office, Mr. Bhuvanesh Chaturvedi, in the Rajya Sabha during question hour today. He said that component level fabrication for INSAT-2D has been completed and the design work on INSAT-2E is in progress.

Iran

Daily on Growing U.S., Russia 'Disagreement'

LD0712123294 Tehran IRNA in English 1120 GMT 7 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Dec. 7, IRNA—A morning English-language daily here Wednesday [7 December] said that the Budapest Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) has become the arena for the United States and Russia to fight their battles.'TEHRAN TIMES' in its editorial referred to the disagreement between Moscow and Washington on cessation of expansion of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and wrote that the U.S is a supporter of NATO's expansion to include not only Eastern European countries but also the republics of the former Soviet Union.

The U.S. contention is that the more countries join NATO, the safer Europe will be, the daily said adding that according to Yeltsin, expansion of NATO to include Russia's former republics would be a danger to Russia.

The serious confrontation between the U.S. and Russia at this conference could be interpreted in many ways, the article wrote and noted "some observers believed that the sweet dreams of both powers about mutual cooperation have been disrupted and a new form of Cold War has begun."

The disagreement between Russia and the U.S. is an indication that Moscow wanted to "be taken seriously," said the paper. "Russian support of the Serbs has actually impeded NATO's efforts to curb the Serbian onslaught. Russia may be aiming at polarizing NATO."

Stressing that the U.S. power was "shrinking" worldwide due to its interference in many parts of the world which has caused the U.S. "unpopularity," the paper wrote "the total [words indistinct] one power among many and being unpopular has created an identity crisis for the United States."

It noted in conclusion that while the deep desire of the U.S. is to be the one and only superpower, in order to attain this status the U.S. has to take stands and perform actions which are in conflict with reality.

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Radio Views Christopher's Visit to Syria, Israel

LD0712141894 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1130 GMT 7 Dec 94

[Unattributed commentary]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher has arrived in Tel Aviv for Damascus on the second leg of his three-day visit to the region.

Christopher who met and conferred with the Syrian president and other high ranking officials of that country in Damascus on Tuesday, 6 December, has held talks with the Israeli officials in Tel Aviv today, Wednesday.

Later during his brief stay in Gaza, the U.S. secretary of state is to have talks with Yasir 'Arafat.

The current visit of the American secretary of state is his seventh visit to the Middle East region this year, which has taken place within the framework of his shuttle diplomacy aimed at removing the present gulf between Damascus and Tel Aviv.

Breaking the 10-month old deadlock in the Syria-Israel talks and bringing their viewpoints closer in order to resolve their difference, like in the past, form the main axes of Mr. Christopher's visit to the region.

Tel Aviv, by setting aside the basis of October 1991 Madrid talks, that is exchanging peace with land, is calling for broad base peace with Syria, prior to pulling its troops from Golan Heights. This is when Syria says that any peace deals with Zionist regime is possible only after the complete withdrawal of the Israeli forces within the framework of the implementation of the Security Council Resolution 242, 338, and 425.

These are the resolutions that had formed the basis of the Arab-Israeli talks and have now been side-lined by the Zionist regime by shattering the said framework.

It is evident that given the special ties between Washington and Tel Aviv and the U.S. open support for the Zionist regime, America cannot be considered as an impartial mediator. As a matter of fact the Arab countries, following the oil war, accepted to have a joint meeting with the Zionist regime on the basis of the 25-year-old Resolution 242, that is on the basis of peace against land or, in another words, the withdrawal of the Israeli forces from the Arab land. But what has been achieved so far is the breaking of the initial framework of talks under the U.S. support, providing the Arabs nothing.

Under these conditions, analysts believe the Syrian officials' insistence on the restoration of their lost rights is a positive move though the other Arab sides such as the PLO and Jordan are now moving in opposite direction.

Therefore, the Syrian leader's recent remark who had said that he preferred the present status quo in the talks in order not to do something which Israeli desires, can reflect the climate prevailing over the Syria-Israel talks.

But Christopher's remarks after his meeting with Mr. al-Asad, based on re-emphasis on the mediatory efforts, reinforced the belief that under the present conditions, the only fruit of the U.S. secretary of state's efforts is to check the compromise trend in the region from collapsing and fight the anti-compromise currents.

Daily Reports President Not To Attend ICO Summit

LD0812094794 Tehran IRNA in English 0846 GMT 8 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Dec. 8, IRNA—President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani will not attend the summit meeting of Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) [ICO] in Morocco, a morning daily reported here Thursday [8 December].

'JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI' quoted an informed source as saying that a Foreign Ministry delegation will take part in the meeting. However, official sources have not made any comment on the issue yet.

Nateq-Nuri Addresses Ukrainian Parliament

LD0612225994 Kiev Radio Ukraine World Service in Ukrainian 0800 GMT 6 Dec 94

[Address by Majlis Speaker 'Ali Akbar Nateq-Nuri to the Ukrainian Parliament in Kiev on 6 December—live or recorded; in Persian with passage-by-passage translation into Ukrainian, translated from Persian throughout]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. Your Excellency, the speaker, esteemed deputies. I should first like to express my sincerest sentiments and warmest feelings for being here in Ukraine and standing before the esteemed deputies of the nation. And I appreciate with much thanks the hospitality extended to me by the colleagues. I am very happy and honored to be visiting Ukraine's first Parliament since your country's independence and to get to know you, respected friends. May God grant you success. [passage omitted]

Your Excellency, Mr. Speaker, esteemed audience, relations between the great countries of the Islamic Republic of Iran and Ukraine are extremely good. Just as you are aware, the Islamic Republic of Iran was among the first countries that officially recognized Ukraine's independence and took steps immediately to open an embassy and appoint an ambassador. The two countries enjoy a high very high level of political relations and high-ranking delegations at the level of the presidency and parliamentary speaker have traveled to the Islamic Republic of Iran and have reached very good agreements. I hope that, in view of the understanding that exists between the two countries, relations between them

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will further increase along with their talks on the crisis-ridden situation in the region and on international issues. The two countries enjoy great industrial and economic potentials which create the basis for the expansion of these kinds of relations. The two sides could cooperate in implementing industrial projects. The relatively short distances, easy transport system, and also the good market that exists for each others' goods are among the prominent features enabling the expansion of commercial relations. Apart from these potentials, unfortunately, economic, commercial, and industrial relations between the two countries have not grown as much as they should or ought to have. So, the two sides should endeavor to solve existing problems as soon as possible. I, as the speaker of parliament of the Islamic Republic of Iran, explicitly declare my own and the Iranian Majlis's readiness to support every step taken toward a greater expansion of these relations. I am convinced that relations between the two countries should increase in all fields. The two countries benefit from ancient and rich histories and cultures and share other ties which could very much help widen relations in these fields. Presently, Ukrainians have become more familiar with Iranian art and culture and it is appropriate to increase the exchanges of delegations to make the peoples of both countries more familiar with each others' cultures. [passage omitted]

The rapid trend in regional, world and international developments have led to new conditions. The region in which we live has been the starting point for various developments. The crises that exist now, the situation in Karabakh, Tajikistan, and Bosnia-Herzegovina, are among the issues that require deep discussions between the two sides.

Bosnia-Herzegovina is important to the world, politicians and nations for a number of reasons. I, therefore, feel it is vital for me to point out a number of issues.

First, from the point of view of coexistence among nations: Following developments in the former Soviet Union and the communist world, why should ethnic and religious fanaticism replace respecting cultures and beliefs in the more free climate achieved?

It is a tool, and in the end, the uselessness of the vast and complex UN has meant that in a region that it has declared a safe haven—such as the Bihac region—the people of Bosnia-Herzegovina are being massacred. If this is the situation in a safe haven, what sort of crimes await us in other regions?

The West's falsehoods, especially America's, claim to support the unity and territorial integrity of Bosnia-Herzegovina while leaving the hands of the criminals free to operate.

And finally, the stances of countries toward this historical crime: No nation can remain indifferent toward the massacre of innocent people, the rape of women and children, and the destruction of people's homes. We are all responsible regarding these incidents and we should act according to our duties. [passage omitted]

Terms Relations 'Superb'

NC0812082994 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0330 GMT 8 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] The parliamentary speakers of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Republic of Ukraine addressed a press conference in Kiev and described the level of relations between the two countries as superb and the visit by the Iranian parliamentary delegation to Ukraine as successful.

During this press conference, the Speaker of the Islamic Majles referred to the cordial political relations between Tehran and Kiev, saying: In the course of this visit, the establishment of a joint economic commission of the two countries was agreed upon and will expedite the implementation of economic agreements.

Regarding the plan for transport of Iranian gas to Ukraine, Nateq-Nuri stated: During this visit, the two countries have agreed to set up a consortium among Iran, Azerbaijan, and Ukraine so that the construction of the gas transportation line can be expedited. The Speaker of the Islamic Majles expressed our country's willingness for cooperation with Ukraine in the fields of mineral exploration, purchase of airplanes, iron implements, wheat, shortening, and sugar. At this press conference, the Speaker of the Ukrainian parliament referred to the fruitful nature of the bilateral talks and described Iran-Ukraine cooperation as strategic. According to our correspondent, yesterday evening a cultural accord was also signed between Tehran and Kiev.

ASEAN Delegation Visits Free Trade Zone

LD0812062894 Tehran IRNA in English 0309 GMT 8 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Bandar-e 'Abbas, Dec. 7, IRNA—A delegation consisting of ambassadors and economic representatives of the member countries of Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) today visited Qeshm free trade zone in the Persian Gulf, to assess the possibility of investments in the Iranian free trade zones.

Deputy director-general of the Qeshm free trade zone, Hasan Sadat, in a meeting with the ASEAN's delegation, described the potentials and advantages of the Iranian free trade zone region for attraction of the foreign investments.

While in the region, the ASEAN's delegation visited an international airport, jetty building, the landscaping projects, sport as well as educational complexes, the project of building "Persian Gulf Bridge" and sites for setting up of cement and steel factories.

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The ASEAN's delegation consisted of ambassadors and economic representatives of Indonesia, Thailand, Singapore, the Philippines, Malaysia and Brunei.

Velayati Says Serb Aggression 'Against Islam'

NC0812090194 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0430 GMT 8 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] At the session of the foreign ministers of the Islamic Conference Organization [ICO] contact group, the Islamic Republic of Iran called for the formation of a volunteer force from Islamic countries to be dispatched to Bosnia-Herzegovina to assist the people of that country in their self-defense.

Dr. Velayati, who returned from the Geneva session last night, spoke to our correspondents and said that the reason for convening this session was the continuation and intensification of the Serbs' attacks, especially in Bihac and Sarajevo. He said: The participants in this session were unanimous that Serbian aggression is confrontation against Islam and Muslims.

Describing the outcome of the Geneva session, our foreign minister said that it has paved the way for the upcoming ICO summit session on Bosnia-Herzegovina and stressed: At the Geneva session, the Islamic countries reiterated to the secretary general their readiness to dispatch more peace-keeping forces to Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Regarding the remarks by Bosnia-Herzegovina President Izetbegovic at the Geneva session, Dr. Velayati said:

[Begin Velayati recording] Mr. Alija Izetbegovic, the esteemed Bosnian president clearly stated that the Islamic countries have rendered effective assistance, but at the same time he stressed that it is not enough. If the Bosnian people have to be able to resist such aggression, the assistance of the Islamic world should not only continue, it should increase. He particularly mentioned Iran as the country that provided assistance to the people of Bosnia- Herzegovina, enabling them to resist in Bihac so far.

These were the very lucid remarks of his excellency Izetbegovic at the ICO contact group officials' session and during the bilateral meeting that we had. [end recording]

Intelligence Minister Returns From Pakistan

LD0812121094 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 8 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Intelligence Minister 'Ali Fallahian- Khuzestani returned this morning from a visit to Pakistan. After arriving in Tehran he said: Among the most important topics discussed with Pakistan's high-ranking officials were cooperation between the two countries on security matters, the fight against drug trafficking, and the situation in Afghanistan.

Mr. Fallahian added: We are determined to confront the bandits and smugglers, who undermine security along our borders. The Pakistani officials have recently become more serious about taking action and have considered hanging as a punishment for drug traffickers. On this basis it was agreed that this problem along the two countries' borders should be uprooted.

Mr. Fallahian pointed out: During the talks with the Pakistani officials, the situation in Afghanistan was discussed. The two countries stressed the need for employing everything in their power to establish a just peace and a broad-based government in Afghanistan.

Besharati, Zimbabwean Minister Sign Police Accord

LD0612195694 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1730 GMT 6 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] On the basis of a memorandum of understanding, signed today in Tehran between the interior ministers of Iran and Zimbabwe, the two countries will cooperate in the areas of security and law enforcement.

'Ali Mohammed Besharati-Jahromi and his Zimbabwean counterpart also viewed the issue of Zimbabwe benefiting from the experiences of the Islamic Republic of Iran's Law Enforcement Force, in particular in the areas of fighting terrorism and drug-smuggling.

In an interview with our correspondent, Zimbabwean Home Affairs Minister Dumiso Dabengwa explained that contrary to propaganda waged by Western countries and Israel, the rate of crime is very low in the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Zimbabwe's home affairs minister also met with President 'Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani.

Reason for Tariq 'Aziz Visit to Russia Questioned

LD0712100394 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0445 GMT 7 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tariq 'Aziz unexpectedly arrived in Moscow yesterday. He announced in Moscow that he was carrying a message from President Saddam Husayn to President Boris Yeltsin. Although the details of the message and the objective of the visit have not been declared, most political analysts believe that Baghdad is placing its bets on Russia lifting the economic sanctions, thanks to the relative changes recently observed in Moscow's foreign policy. By making economic concessions to Russia, Iraq intends to fracture the ranks of the UN Security Council permanent members against itself, which might lead to lifting economic sanctions.

Iraq and Russia have signed a $2.5 billion agreement to rebuild the Iraqi oilfields and installations. In addition, Baghdad has expressed desire to purchase arms from

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Moscow to rebuild its military capability, which suffered heavy blows during the oil war. These steps demonstrate that Iraq is striving to persuade the Russian statesmen to move toward lifting the economic sanctions against it as soon as possible.

Thanks to Russia's economic plight and its failure to compete with major world economic powers, the Iraqi proposals seem very tempting and ideal for promoting Russia's economic activities abroad. In addition, in the wake of the cold war, Russia has resorted to cooperation with the West instead of competing with Iraq. However, some time ago, Russia came to the conclusion that the West would not compensate it properly for its cooperation within the international arena, and it is not doing much to help Moscow through the existing economic crisis. As a result Russia has adopted a foreign policy which is against full cooperation with the West. The new foreign policy is almost independent. This was a policy pursued by Yeltsin's opponents at home for some time, and the two crises of Iraq and Bosnia now confirm that Yeltsin has changed course, too.

To sum up, one can conclude that the recent decision by Iraq to recognize Kuwait's sovereignty and territorial integrity was the fruit of Russians' active diplomacy, and it is further proof that Baghdad is attaching plenty of hope to the Russians. Tariq 'Aziz's visit to Moscow also demonstrates that Baghdad is striving to make more concessions to Moscow in order as to strengthen their motive of lifting the economic sanctions against Iraq.

Musavi Summarizes Afghanistan Talks

LD0712172094 Tehran IRNA in English 1517 GMT 7 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Dec. 7, IRNA—Iran's representative in the ongoing Afghanistan peace talks in Tehran, Mir-Mohammad Musavi, told reporters here Wednesday [7 December] that the foundation for peace in Afghanistan has been laid during the nine-day indirect talks among various Afghan rival factions.

Musavi said that different Afghan rival groups were almost unanimous concerning cease-fire, transitional period and establishing a permanent government.

Musavi added that the Tehran talks helped remove the prevailing atmosphere of suspicion and pessimism which result in continuation of clashes.

The Tehran peace talks indicate that the establishment of cease-fire in Afghanistan is not impossible and that all Afghan groups attending the talks stressed on the need to establish cease-fire, he added.

Meanwhile, Musavi added, Afghanistan plight is very complex and that any peace plan must come from the representative of Afghanistan.

Tehran proximity talks is being held under the auspices of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) [ICO] with participation of the U.N. representative.

Minister Inaugurates Mashhad-Herat Telephone Line

LD0312143694 Tehran IRNA in English 1359 GMT 3 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Mashhad, Khorasan province, Dec. 3 IRNA—Minister of Post, Telegraph and Telephone Mohammad Gharazi inaugurated a telephone line between this northeastern province and Herat province of Afghanistan Saturday [3 December].

While inaugurating the project, the PTT minister talked on phone with Herat governor, Ismaeal Khan, who called for more telephone lines between the two countries.

The establishment of the five channel telephone line from Mashhad to Iran's border with Afghanistan has cost the country rls. 300 million and the Afghan party has shouldered the expense of the rest of the project.

Pope's Remarks on Iranian Christians Criticized

'Illusions' of Problems Denied

LD0512184094 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1440 GMT 5 Dec 94

[From the "Press Review" program]

[FBIS Translated Text] The JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI newspaper has devoted its main editorial column today to the remarks made by Pope John Paul II in his meeting with two Iranian Christian bishops.

At the meeting, the leader of the world's Catholics wished that all the people of Iran would become priests [Keshish—Christian priest] so that outwardly, a problem called: Christian missionary activities, would not arise. The editorial writer has criticized the pope's illusions about problems allegedly faced by Iran's Christians, adding: "Christian religious minorities in Iran are represented in the Majles by their deputies who defend their rights. Iranian Christians themselves reject remarks that they face problems in their efforts to practice their religious rites."

The writer then goes on to describe the problems faced by Muslims in Christian societies, and points to the pope's stance in endorsing the genocide of Muslims in Bosnia and the use of pressure against Muslim students wearing the veil in France.

Vatican Ambassador Summoned

LD0712180494 Tehran IRNA in English 1607 GMT 7 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Dec. 7, IRNA—Vatican's Ambassador to Tehran was summoned on Wednesday [7 December] to Foreign Ministry to explain about the recent statements attributed to pope.

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Director general of West Europe department of the Foreign Ministry expressed regret and astonishment over dissemination of such statements and called on Vatican's ambassador to offer explanations on the issue.

Vatican's ambassador expressed regret and concern over distortion of pope's remarks by the mass media and underlined Vatican's willingness to consolidate its relations and expand its cooperation with the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Certain media circles recently quoted pope as referring to existence of problems and restrictions on the way of church officials' activities in Iran in his recent visit with two Iranian bishops.

Pilots To Replace Russians in Tupolevs

LD0612200494 Tehran IRNA in English 1847 GMT 6 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kerman, Dec. 6, IRNA—Seyyed 'Ali- Reza Mija'fari, head of the security department of Mahan Airlines said here today Iranian pilots would gradually replace Russian pilots for flying the Russian-made Tupolev planes.

He said a group of Iranian pilots who had completed a three-month aviation course in Russia had returned to Iran the previous week. Mahan airline is to take delivery of an additional plane shortly.

Ahl-ol-Bayt Confirms Khamene'i as Marja'

LD0712154594 Tehran IRNA in English 1229 GMT 7 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Dec. 7, IRNA—The Ahl-ol-Bayt [House of the Prophet] World Assembly in a statement confirmed Grand Ayatollah 'Ali Khamene'i as marja'-e taqlid.

The statement published in the Wednesday [7 December] issue of the English—language daily 'TEHRAN TIMES' said that all the required qualifications are manifested in Grand Ayatollah Khamene'i.

"Khamene'i's comprehensive knowledge on jurisprudence, intellectual, cultural, political and social aspects, his great ability on making resolutions, his independent decision making on how to encounter the enemies of Islam, encouraged the ulema to express their opinions on this vital Islamic issue and highly recommended Ayatollah Khamene'i as the new marja."

The statement termed as "a great feat" the declaration by all the ulema that the Grand Ayatollah Khamene'i was fully qualified for marja'iat.

The paper quoted the association as saying, "with complete respect we have for all the ulema and mojahedin, and fully realizing that following any one of the marja' is acceptable, the Ahl-ol-Bayt World Assembly confirmed the choice of Ayatollah Khamene'i as marja'-e taqlid.

Rafsanjani Lauds Basij in Defense, Reconstruction

LD0712173194 Tehran IRNA in English 1543 GMT 7 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Dec. 7, IRNA—President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani here Wednesday [7 December] lauded the massive presence of basij forces (volunteer) in different arena of defense and reconstruction.

Speaking in the nation-wide gathering of basiji students of the medical sciences university, the president said that the faithful basij forces have played their constructive role anywhere and anytime by defending the country and safeguarding the Islamic values.

President Hashemi-Rafsanjani who is also the head of the High Council for the Cultural Revolution said that the universities are considered as the important institutions of the country and the guarantor of the future of the country and prosperity of the nation in different dimensions.

He said that the administration has given top priority to promotion of higher education in either scientific or quantitative aspects and works to coordinate the universities with the sublime values of the Islamic revolution.

President Hashemi-Rafsanjani said that the number of university students has increased from 150,000 before the culmination of the 1979 Islamic revolution to 1.1 million.

Studying along with the faith in Islam and the Islamic revolution is very useful for the society and that basij members in the universities guarantee attainment of the goal, he said.

Referring to the large-scale presence of women in universities, President Hashemi-Rafsanjani said, "today, the Muslim women have taken important roles in the society and despite the propaganda of the enemy, they are advancing ahead."

He said that Islam and the Islamic revolution highly respect the role of the women in different scientific and social arenas.

Over 10,000 university students gathered at Azadi stadium today to mark the student day, December 7.

Minister of Health, 'Ali Reza Marandi and commander of the resistance forces of basij (volunteer corps), Brigadier General 'Ali Reza Afshar gave reports on the activities of basij students. The basij units at universities were created upon the orders of the late Imam Khomeyni in 1988.

Pakistan

Officials Meet With U.S. Undersecretary Slocombe

BK0812111394 Rawalpindi JANG in Urdu 8 Dec 94 pp 1, 6

[Report by special correspondent]

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[FBIS Translated Text] Islamabad—Walter Slocombe, the U.S. under secretary of defense for policy, held separate meetings on Wednesday [7 December] with Interior Minister Major General, retired, Nasirullah Khan Babar and Chief of Army Staff Gen. Abdul Waheed in Islamabad and Rawalpindi respectively. The two sides exchanged views on various aspects of defense cooperation between Pakistan and the United States.

According to responsible sources, during these meetings, the U.S. under secretary of defense assured that in spite of the Pressler Amendment, Pakistani-U.S. relations will be promoted in areas which do not come under the purview of this U.S. legislation. The two sides also discussed the obstacles created by the Pressler Amendment in the way of the supply of military equipment to Pakistan, plans for joint military exercises, and other related matters. Walter Slocombe later flew into Peshawar where he met the corps commander. The U.S. under secretary of defense left for New Delhi after visiting Peshawar and Landi Kotal.

Editorial Urges Economic Initiatives With PRC

BK0812094694 Islamabad THE NEWS in English 8 Dec 94 p 7

[Editorial: "Improving Pak-China Trade"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] During his visit to China, President Farooq Ahmad Khan Leghari observed that in the wake of tremendous changes across the globe, there was urgent need to further consolidate bilateral relations between China and Pakistan. He went on to offer joint ventures in the infrastructure and manufacturing sectors. These could be considered for building ships, submarines, frigates, aircraft and bridges. Pakistan, he told his Chinese hosts, was also interested in the development of sea transport manufacturing containers, power transmission lines, transformers and electricity distribution systems. China could also assist in the development of the Gwadur seaport. In view of the close relationship between the two countries President Leghari's proposals are expected to receive sympathetic attention in Beijing.

The Chinese economy is one of the fastest growing in the world. For years it has maintained a steady annual growth rate of around 13 per cent by the turn of the century it would emerge still stronger. China has already managed a breakthrough in technological advancement. An agreement on reciprocal encouragement and protection of investment already exists between Pakistan and China. There also exists the Pak-China ministerial commission for policy decisions that also ensures their implementation through follow-up action. Thus all the necessary elements to foster economic co- operation between the two countries are in place.

Among various proposals made by the President his offer to set up a specialised industrial zone for China deserves to be specially mentioned. He also proposed that China and Pakistan process raw material on a joint-venture basis which would benefit industries of both countries. China could also help in the revival of our engineering industry, said to be operating below its installed capacity. A major decision taken by Chinese leaders during the Pak- China high-level talks was to increase imports from Pakistan so that the trade imbalance could be improved. Pakistan imports from China mainly machinery and equipment. China imports from Pakistan some raw materials, textile goods and agri-products. The proposal to process raw material for use both in China and Pakistan could also help in this behalf. Organisations engaged in export promotion will have to make serious efforts, as will exporters themselves, to help achieve a trade balance. They are well aware of the demand in the Chinese market and their ability to meet it.

As President Leghari himself pointed out that Pak-China friendship has blossomed over the decades and matured into a model of interstate relations worthy of envy and emulation by others. Numerous examples can be quoted of Pak-China cooperation and of China helping Pakistan in its economic progress. Most prominently Chinese assistance has helped in laying the foundation of economic growth on self-reliance basis in Pakistan. China has always been ready to assist us. If we are now seeking economic co-operation from it, it is for us to take the initiative in the shape of concrete and detailed proposals. As always, these would get an immediate and encouraging response.

Paper Welcomes PRC Nuclear Plant

BK0812123394 Lahore PAKISTAN in Urdu 8 Dec 94 p 10

[Editorial: "China's Readiness to Provide Another Nuclear Plant"]

[FBIS Translated Text] President Farooq Ahmad Khan Leghari has said that his talks with Chinese President Jiang Zemin and Prime Minister Li Peng were held in an atmosphere of understanding and mutual trust. There is identity of views between the two neighborly and friendly countries on regional and international issues. The two countries have agreed to eliminate the trade imbalance and the necessary steps will be taken. Pakistan's imports from China amounted to 440 million rupees, whereas China's imports from Pakistan were only worth 53 million rupees. Pakistan wants to increase exports to China and is able export a large quantity of goods to Xinjiang Province.

The president has discussed with Chinese leaders the supply of another Chinese nuclear power plant to Pakistan. It is a matter of satisfaction that the Chinese leaders have expressed their readiness to supply the nuclear plant, but the real problem is the payment. The private sector is expected to provide the required funds for this purpose.

The president has categorically stated that Pakistan has not acquired the Chinese M-11 missiles and China, too,

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has not shown any interest in supplying them. Pakistan has, however, purchased some missiles that come under the purview of the Missile Technology Control Regime. The president thanked the Chinese leaders for supporting Pakistan's stand on Kashmir. China is in favor of a peaceful solution of the Kashmir dispute and has been urging India to reach such a settlement.

Two Russian Defense Teams Due To Arrive

BK0712111694 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 7 Dec 94 pp 1, 8

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Islamabad—Dec 6: Amidst conflicting reports emanating from Moscow about Russian reluctance to sell arms to Pakistan two separate defence teams are arriving in Islamabad in the last fortnight of December to hold talks with Military and Air Force officials for a possible defence cooperation between the two countries, The Muslim learned from credible defence sources here this afternoon.

According to these sources a high-level military team will arrive on Dec 15 while a team of airforce will arrive at the end of December to meet the Air Chief Abbas Khattak and other Air force officials.

Official sources here are very optimistic about striking a deal with Russia over the purchase of conventional defence systems during the forthcoming talks.

According to official sources the major impediment between the two countries was not political but financial in actual terms. They said that while Islamabad wants rouble to be fixed at the exchange rates as Russia has offered to India for defence sales, the Moscow insists on fixing new rates of rouble with Pakistan. Russia has maintained that since it has massive defence sales with India it has to give special exchange rates to India. But it cannot treat Pakistan on a par which is likely to go for limited defence purchases.

According to official sources the post-cold war Russian regime after briefly flirting with the possibility of putting its huge military industrial complex to civilian use, is now using arms to earn that much needed foreign exchange for re-vitalising its economy. They said, in other words Russia no longer intend subjecting bilateral relations to ideological reasons. Instead it was keen to develop relations with those who help it make difficult transitions to a successful market economy.

Officials said Pakistan was a serious buyer of Russian equipment and that too at hard cash. With India it will not receive any hard cash for the sale of MiG 29 as these will be paid by balance in hand of the 83 million dollars US credit extended by Russia. The credit was revived during the last the Tribune quoting officials of Russian Foreign Ministry reported last week that there was no possibility of defence cooperation between Islamabad and Moscow. The report says, "Russia today discounted possibilities of any major defence tie-up with Islamabad during the visit of a Rus-visit of Indian Prime Minister to russia recently. [sentence as published]

According to well-informed sources the forthcoming Pak-Russia defence talks would be focused on the possible procurement of SU-27 from Russia and other defence systems. Pakistan is keen to induct the Russian fighter bomber which not only meets its threat perception but also takes the limited resources into consideration. SU-27 has a normal operating weight of 22,000 kg and carries up to 10 metric tons of fuel which gives it a maximum range of around 4,000 km. Pakistan will be negotiating a billion 1 US dollars deal with the Russian team for the purchase of 24 SU-27.

Meanwhile Indian newspaper sian defence delegation to Pakistan scheduled for later this month. There is no question of establishing any wide-ranging military technical cooperation between Moscow and Islamabad, according to Russian foreign Ministry officials. "We have no knowledge about any major weapon system sales." a senior Foreign Ministry official said when asked to comment on reports that Pakistan intends to acquire two squadrons of SU-27 fighter bombers. "Yes indeed a Rosvooruzheniy (Russia's Arms Export Agency) team is going to Pakistan to discuss some questions of military technical cooperation but talks would concern limited cooperation", he said.

Russia would not undertake any steps that would upset the balance of forces in South Asia. Any development of relations with Pakistan would not be detrimental to the traditional partnership with India, the official said.

Sri Lanka

Cease-Fire Timing To Depend on LTTE Response

BK0712071094 Hong Kong AFP in English 0604 GMT 7 Dec 94

[Report by Amal Jayasinghe]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Colombo, Dec 7 (AFP)—Tamil politicians here say that President Chandrika Kumaratunga's decision to offer a ceasefire to separatist Tamil Tiger guerrillas could spark a long-awaited breakthrough in resuming stalled peace talks.

Sri Lanka's high-powered security council agreed in a meeting Tuesday [6 December] to a truce with the rebel Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) ahead of a visit to Colombo next month by Pope John Paul II.

"An announcement of a ceasefire could be made within a few days. The timing depends on how soon the government gets a response from the LTTE," a defence source who attended the meeting told AFP.

The government had suspended talks with the LTTE after the rebel group was implicated in the October 24

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bombing here of a presidential campaign rally, which killed opposition leader Gamini Dissanayake and 57 others.

Tamil legislator Dharmalingam Sidhathan said the government's decision was a "step in the right direction to bring about a permanent peace" in the embattled northeast, where the Tigers want to establish an independent homeland called Eelam.

"We welcome the ceasefire offer by the government and hope that the LTTE will respond positively," said Sidhathan, who heads the anti-LTTE Tamil political party, the Democratic People's Liberation Front.

Another Tamil official said the ceasefire should apply to every political faction and should prohibit any violent acts against minority Tamil groups.

"We need guarantees that the LTTE will not engage in political terror and kill leaders, whether they (the victims) are Sinhala or Tamil," said L. Keethiswaran, of the Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front (EPRLF) said.

He said the government's ceasefire plans envision upgrading peace talks to find a solution to the protracted ethnic conflict, which has claimed over 30,000 lives since 1972.

He said the proposed truce should be extended beyond the Pope's visit on January 20 and welcomed the government's initiative to open a safe passage for Tamil civilians living in the LTTE-held northern Jaffna peninsula.

Previous ceasefire arrangements between security forces and the LTTE have ended in failure, with both sides trading accusations of truce violations.

The latest attempt at reaching a solution may prove more successful, with an increasing proportion of the battle-weary population supporting peace.

President Kumaratunga's party won the August parliamentary vote and the presidential poll in November by making a new peace initiative a main plank of the campaign platform.

Defence sources said that Kumaratunga wants the Tigers to allow civilians from the Jaffna peninsula to use a land route that runs through a strategic government military base.

The government wants to guarantee minority Roman Catholics in Jaffna access to the passageway if they wish to make a pilgrimage to Colombo during the Pope's stopover next month.

Travellers who braved a hazardous three-hour boat journey to reach the mainland told reporters Tuesday that the Tigers said they may allow traffic through the Elephant Pass overland route.

"Tigers say they will open Elephant Pass if the army agrees to allow people through without any checks," a Tamil civilan told local reporters.

PRC Delegation Discusses Investment Projects

BK0812115694 Colombo LANKAPUVATH in English 0841 GMT 8 Dec 94

["Pool item"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Colombo, 8 Dec (LANKAPUVATH)—Sri Lanka has attracted its first investors from the People's Republic of China. A 23-member delegation from Guangzhou Province [as received], led by its Administrator Wu Bin Hiu [name and title as received] and President Gungdong [name as received] of the Chamber of International Commerce, met BOI [Board of Investment] Director-General A. de Vass Gunawardene, in Colombo on Monday [5 December]. They discussed investment projects in steel rolling mills, ship dismantling, food processing and assembling of machinery, amounting to several billions of rupees. They also agreed to collaborate with the Lankan private sector in joint ventures.

Mr. Vass Gunawardene said: "This looks like the beginning of a long investment relationship, apart from the traditional friendship between the two countries. The visit of this delegation at this juncture demonstrates investor confidence in the government and its economic policy.

"A second delegation from China's National Aviation Industry Corporation is expected early next week," he said.

Guangzhou Province is known to be the biggest and fastest growing industrialised area. It adjoins Hong Kong.

"China attracted large investments from the rest of the world after opening to foreign capital, and now the Chinese are going out to invest in foreign countries. The Chinese people have faith in Sri Lanka, that is why they are coming here", the director general said.

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